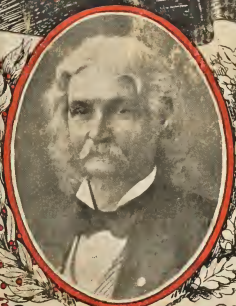


QUANTRELL



BY CAPT. KIT DALTON.

UNDER THE BLACK FLAG

A GUERRILLA CAPTAIN UNDER QUANTRELL AND A BORDER OUTLAW FOR 17 YEARS.



Graff

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FRANK JAMES. CAPT. KIT DALTON.
Age 67 Years. Age 67 Years.

Photographed July 4, 1910, at Summit, Miss.

KIT DALTON { A Confederate Soldier
A Guerrilla Captain under Quantrell
A Texas Ranger
A Border Outlaw for 17 Years

FRANK JAMES { A Confederate Soldier
A Guerrilla under Quantrell
A Brother of the noted Jesse James
A Border Outlaw with the James Boys
of Missouri for 17 Years after the
surrender of the Confederacy.



UNDER THE BLACK FLAG

By

CAPTAIN KIT DALTON

A Confederate Soldier



A Guerrilla Captain under the fearless leader Quantrell, and a Border Outlaw for seventeen years following the surrender of the Confederacy. Associated with the most noted band of free booters the world has ever known.

CHAPTER I. PREAMBLE.

History is but a record of the doings of men. Collectively or individually, it is the same.

The march of civilization is a trail of blood and all the glorious conquests of war are but sign posts along the highway of ages that mark the greedy avarice of ambitious man.

Life is a never ending struggle between the forces of good and evil; and when good would triumph, it must needs oft-times use the bloody weapons of its cruel foe, and when evil would conquer, it does not hesitate to march under the banner of the righteous for a season.

Throughout all the ages, men have felt the inherent right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and to secure these blessings for themselves and bequeath them to posterity, they have not hesitated to offer up their lives on the altar of their country. Since the dawn of creation men have felt the need of a leader, but they have never surrendered that inborn craving to dictate to the leader the way they want to be led. It is their birthright and it is not for sale for a mess of pottage, and to maintain it there will ever be wars and rumors of wars.

Since the first records of human affairs were rudely chiseled on the granite walls of the cave dweller in quaint signs and gory symbols, it has been the desire of man to perpetuate his memory by whatever deeds of valor he may have been able to achieve or whatever acts of statescraft he may have exercised for the good of his clan.

Men of genius make history, but, alas, they do not make the historian. The makers of history are seldom the writers thereof, which accounts for the preponderance of fiction in the midst of a jumble of facts.

Moses, Joshua, Saul and David were the makers of Hebrew history, but the registering of their achievements fell to the scribes of the tribe of Levi.

Cyrus of Persia, Alexander of Macedonia, Attila the Hun, Genghis Kahn the Mogul, Caesar of Rome, Frederic of Prussia, Napoleon the Corsican and Washington the Cavalier, were the makers of imperishable history, but they did not make the historian.

Had our first parent, Adam, been a man of letters we might have had a different account of that little Eden episode which has cost the world so dearly, and if Cain had had the advantages of the little log school house at the Cross Roads, we might have his version of that fatal misunderstanding with his brother and be more charitably inclined towards this unfortunate youth, in whose behalf a word has never been spoken nor a line ever written. We have listened eagerly to the prosecuting attorney, but counsel for defense seems to have rested the case without evidence, testimony or argument.

While I deeply deplore the untimely and tragic end of my distant uncle, I cannot but feel that the world has heaped too much obloquy on the unfortunate fratricide without a knowledge of all the facts leading up to the deplorable affair.

Adam and Cain were the first makers of history and the kind and quality has not materially changed since their day. It is all a record of crime. Now, since labor is the only legacy bequeathed the historian by his great grandparent, many time removed, is it not possible that the scribes smarting under the cruel edict which compelled them to earn his living by the sweat of his face, dealt a little hard with the old gentleman? We blame Adam with loss of Eden and all our woes, but, as I have never heard his side of the story, I am inclined to withhold judgment and frankly admit that the kind of apples that grew in that famous orchard might have tempted the best of us.

Before condemning Adam any further let us put ourselves in his place and tell the world what we would have done under similar circumstances.

What would you do now if the wife of your bosom were to appear before you with a bag of gold in her hand and tell you a snake had directed her to the spot where it had lain buried for a hundred years and that the snake had assured her it was pure gold? Would you stop to question her regarding the appearance and general habits of the snake? Would you ask her what language the snake discoursed in? Possibly Adam had never seen a snake in his life and had no idea whether it walked upright like a man, hopped like a toad or crawled in the dust. I am free to

admit that the first thing I would do would be to go to an assayer and determine the quality of the metal, then find out about the snake afterwards.

We must admit that Adam was a man of very little experience and without a precedent to govern his actions.

As to me, I think Adam deported himself very creditably and carried out the instructions of his wife as became a dutiful husband. and from personal experience, I am emboldened to state that the world would be in a good deal better fix than it is in if we all gave a little more ear to the counsel of our wives. At any rate, the best we can do is to throw the mantel of charity about these, our unfortunate parents, and try to profit by their unhappy fate. We are all the sons and daughters of this misguided gentleman and subject to many more temptations far more alluring in their promise than the one which wrecked and ruined the peace and happiness of Eden.

Say what you will, philosophise as you may, a man's a man for a' that. Adam was a failure and the world has judged him—not by his acts, but by his failure. Men are measured by their success, irrespective of the ends to the means. What the world demands is success. It's all that counts.

If a man triumph under the most favorable circumstances he is pronounced a success, but if he fail because opposed by insurmountable obstacles, he is a failure—in which event virtue is its own reward—whatever that may mean. A revolution is a successful rebellion. A rebellion an unsuccessful revolution.

Bacon's little sortie in Massachusetts was a rebellion, because it failed. Later on the Continental Congress became possessed of the same lofty sentiments that fired Bacon's patriotic breast, Washington was chosen as the embodiment of Colonial patriotism, and after seven long years of bloody strife, wrested the scepter of empire from the hands of a despot and placed the American Eagle on the home made coin of the greatest republic the world has ever known.

Washington's success was the fruit of Bacon's failure.

Thus it is we plant and are unknown, but the reaper comes along and gathers the fruits of our labor, and the world rings with his praise.

The late *unpleasantness* between the states, as it is poetically called, was a rebellion because it failed. The Sepoy mutiny was a rebellion for the same reason, and the once proud Mahara pulls in the harness side by side with the unicorn. But what happened in America will one day happen in India. She will not sleep always. Australia will shake off her lethargy in the years to come, Egypt will rise from the shadow of the pyramids, Canada will shake the frosts from her aged locks, South Africa will once more trek to the strains of martial music, and a new Pliny will have to rise up and invent another unicorn more ferocious and more unconquerable than the one that now adorns the crest of British Arms. For what the Colonies of America did, England's outlying possessions are as sure to do as if it were already a matter of history. Had the Confederate forces succeeded in the field there would have been a United States of America with fewer stars in its banner, and a Confederate States of America with fewer pension parasites to suck life's blood from the heart of labor. But they failed, and a hundred years hence will continue to pay indemnity to the conqueror by an ever-increasing pension roll, which is daily being augmented by impecunious barristers in consideration of a much needed fee. Nor will it ever cease till some inglorious Watt Tyler rises in his wrath and smites the hand of avarice that seeks to take away his meager living to support the worthless hordes of parasites which will one day cover the land like a swarm of black locusts. The brave general fights as long as there is a possibility for success, but when possibilities melt away under the galling fire of overwhelming numbers, he seeks shelter in the hope of coming again in the fullness of strength to retrieve his losses.

So fought the noble boys in their tattered rags of gray, till their every energy was spent in the unequal contest and a pound of currency would not buy a pound of tough mule steak.

But the tragic part is now a matter of pathetic history, and those who so eagerly sprang to arms at the first blast of the trumpets of war are fast fading into the dusky twilight and they must soon hear the muffled drum's sad roll that beats the soldier's last tattoo.

But after the bitter strife of clashing arms and the long

patient battle of reconstruction, they can look over the fields of carnage and say, "I did my best; let the dead past bury its dead."

Youth is the dynamo that drives the restless heart to action; old age the ground wire through which spent energy finds its home at last in the bosom of mother earth. Youth is the swift hound in the chase, old age the battle scarred veteran that rests in shady places and listens with quickened ear and beating heart to the yelping pack in hot pursuit.

The old soldier has been the one, he is now the other. The tales of the conflict he would tell will soon be hushed in the stillness of endless sleep and a new generation must preserve his story in the songs and chronicles of a lost cause.

Historians are merely men who attempt to write of events in their chronological order. They secure what data they can from available sources, tag, number and list the units that make up their records and devote the residue of their energies to such laudations or vituperations as best appeal to their partisan spirit.

They adhere strictly to the truth when the truth reflects credit on the cause they have espoused, and when it does not they side step, just as other men do in the ordinary walks of life.

If the truth is ever learned it must come from the pen that knows not the rancor of hate or the bitterness of sectional animosity, and that day must needs come when suborned witnesses have been disqualified by the icy touch of death.

Absolute impartiality does not exist in contemporary history, and only the coming ages will bring forth a Plutarch or a Josephus who fears not to tell the truth lest the doors of public service be slammed in his face.

I fully realize how heartily I am in sympathy with the cause I espoused and shall accordingly weigh my words, lest in the inrush of tragic memories I say an unjust word to my enemy's hurt. I shall endeavor to relate events in their order and avoid anachronisms as far as possible, and I fully appreciate the value of such an undertaking, since I have no books of reference and no comrade with whom I might discuss the regrettable past and dig from their narrow cells memories of such a soul testing epoch. As I look back over

the days of other years, the changing scenes move before my dreaming fancy in one mighty panorama, each event tripping over its mate in a mad endeavor to make its presence known and demanding its proper place in the records.

There has never been a book written of me and my comrades that could guide my steps in this undertaking. Many books have been written, 'tis true, but the story of "Jack the Giant Killer" or "Don Quixote" relate the true story of these mythical characters just as nearly as those books record the eventful epochs in the lives of myself and my dead comrades.

I am now an old man, too old for the more active pursuits of life, yet not old enough to lie idle like Logan in his cabin, or enough embittered to sulk like Achilles in his tent.

There is a future as well as a past. The past is dead, the future lives. I have ascended the rocky hills of bygone years, and I see stretched before my failing visions the beautiful valley of rest. But before I enter this vale of stillness, I would have the world know the truth, that some of my acts may be justified and others condoned. If I steer one young man from the shoals on which the barque of my young manhood was wrecked, I shall feel that this, my last offering to the world, is worth the time it has taken in the preparation.

And yet—youth pulls for the future, old age cannot shake itself from recollections of the past. I can still feel a thrill from the memory of clashing arms and rattling musketry, as steel met steel and the thirsty sabre drank its greedy fill; and my heart grows heavy as I see through the mists of years friends of my youth hurled from a reckless present through a storm of leaden hail into an uncertain future. Poor boys, they were but creatures of luckless chance, and sacrificed their young lives as a ransom for whatever misguided deeds that brought them to their untimely end.

That they were wrong in many instances, I will neither palliate nor deny. Men are often driven by rash impulse to deeds of bloody mischief, and, oftener still, they but act on that impulse which impelled the Great Law Giver of Israel to demand an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.

That there is a cause for every effect, holds as good in the lives of my dead comrades as in all human and superhuman

affairs. We had many grievances to redress, many causes for the thirst for vengeance, and if perchance we outlawed the tenets of civic rights, the government paid us back measure for measure, and in this it seems that we should be quits.

There lives not today a thinking man who will condemn my comrades and me for one-half the deviltry accredited to us; for if we stood convicted as charged, our guerrillas and freebooters must needs rival Methusaleh in point of longevity, for none but centinarians many times over could possibly have pulled off the number of stunts that have been laid at our door. To make from six to a dozen raids each day in all the states in the Union and twice as many in the territories, to say nothing of a few scattered cases in Canada and Mexico, is a job that might have been pulled off by extra efforts, but, to say the least of it, an extraordinary amount of energy would have been required.

We were human beings, outlawed by the national government and hunted like wild beasts—not permitted to surrender, and by this token were given carte blanche to get our living in whatever way was open to us.

We erred? Yes, of course we did. When a man is not permitted to live under the laws that govern other men, he must live by whatever means he can.

I have a suspicion of an idea that all men go wrong now and then.

Many a court record is as foul with crime as the breath of a basilisk, and many an innocent man has been hurled into eternity as a token of popular appreciation of some spellbinder's irresistible pleadings, and many a guilty man has gone free from the same cause. And the judicial ermine,—is it spotless? Does popular clamor never bias the judgment of him from whom no appeal can be taken? Is he endowed with supernatural wisdom of celestial virtues? Is he infallible? Has he no cause to invoke divine clemency for his errors in judgment or crimes in heart?

“Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,

The proper study of mankind is man.”

Men are creatures of circumstance and you will see in the course of these records how I tried to live a quiet life in the midst of Kentucky hills, and how even this modest wish was

denied me, and how the most trivial of petit circumstances changed the current of my life and hurled me bodily into the open arms of my marauding comrades. The man who enjoys undisturbed all the comforts of this life without their corresponding ills, privations and heartaches is certainly no fit judge to pass on his less fortunate fellow, to whom these blessings have been denied.

Let him who is without sin, cast the first stone. Then it would be safe to live in glass houses.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY LIFE—MUTTERINGS OF WAR.

As this is something in the form of an autobiograhpy, I must needs give some space to the earlier part of my life, though it differs very little from the lives of my rural companions, who, like myself, lived a quiet life among the fields and woods of dear old Kentucky, where by hard labor we wrested a meager living from a niggardly soil and were content with our humble lot.

It matters little with the average reader where the character whose history he reads may have been born, or when. And it is a matter of little concern who his parents may have been or what was their religious faith or political affiliations.

Therefore the records of my early life will occupy but small space in this history, for it is only noteworthy deeds that make history worth the reading, or justifies the writing. Passing over these with a mere mention, we will hurry on to the more important events that linked the name of Kit Dalton with the most picturesque band of freebooters the American continent has ever known.

I was born in Logan County, Kentucky, near the Red River, on the 23d day of January, 1843, an isolated place, far removed from the strife of a busy world and its greedy avarice. The Blue Back Speller was the curriculum of the institution of learning I attended, in which famous classic I managed to matriculate about two winter months for several successive years. I can't recall ever having hung the scalp of a headmark to my girdle nor having been punished for neglect of my scholastic duties. Among my school-mates I was neither a shining light nor a horrible example. My first and only lessons in chirography were devoted to a vain attempt to make straight lines with a goose quill dipped in pokeberry juice, home brewed. I recall with the most vivid memory the woes of these undertakings—how I would spread myself out over the rude slab like a mud turtle, grip my hand-made stylograph, twist my head to one side and try to tickle the lobe of my ear with my restless, roving tongue.

The schoolhouse was built of split logs, chinked with mud.

The floor was of puncheon—a perpetual menace to bare feet—and the seats were made of great oaken slabs with pegs inserted in auger holes at the ends for legs. Our recesses were devoted to leapfrog, footraces, wrestling, bull pen, hot ball and cat, and in those tender ears I received the impact of a hard rubber ball on the after deck of my system with more concern than the minnie ball in my after life. I may mention, incidentally, that I was the champion sprinter in the school, and in the game of base I was always first choice, and this generally meant victory for my side. I was a good jumper, too, and in these respects I may add that I excelled.

We pass on now over these sober days and come to that epoch that stands out on the border line twixt restless youth and impulsive manhood.

When I was fifteen the mutterings of war clouds began to disturb the quiet of those peaceful realms and a spirit of unrest pervaded the atmosphere. Partisan spirit began to make itself manifest and peaceful minds became agitated with the prospects of strife, and peace loving men became inoculated with the virus of adventure. I was not immune. The military drill of raw recruits was a pageant that fired my young soul with the prospect of deeds of daring and glorious achievements. I eagerly watched the rude manoeuvres and greedily drank in the clarion notes of the trumpets of war. My neighbors were soldiers and were rushing to arms in defense of their homes and their beloved south-land. I was but a lad, yet I realize that a bullet from my squirrel rifle could go as straight and as far from my young shoulder as it could from that of the burliest giant in the settlement. Vainly I pleaded with my dear old mother to let me join my happy comrades and hurry to the front, but to all my pleadings she returned a stubborn and positive "No." The restraint of home soon became galling. The hoe was an emblem of servitude; the musket, a badge of freedom, an emblem of glorious achievements. With that sense of anxious solicitude felt only by a loving mother, my every movement was watched and every impulse of my nature, every desire of my heart laid bare to those eyes that would protect my life at the cost of her own. She realized that I must have diversion of some form, so, as a compromise, she prom-

ised me a visit to my uncle, who then lived in Huntington, Tenn., about one hundred miles away, which distance I easily covered on the fleet footed horse she gave me in two days.

Arrived at Huntington, I was complete'y overcome with gladness and surprise to see two of my cousins in the ranks, who seemed to parade their military accomplishments before me to excite envy and admiration. This was more than my impulsive young nature could stand. My soul was rekindled to a raging tempest, and forgetful of my sacred promises to an indulging mother, I quickly enlisted and joined myself to Company G, Seventh Tennessee—Captain Aiden in command. Our regiment was ordered to Jackson, Tenn., where we put in six long months drilling, maneuvering and practicing in the high art of legalized slaughter, and learning to do unto our neighbor across the border what we knew he would do unto us if he got first crack.

The dull, inactive months passed away at last, and joy filled my breast when we were ordered to join General Forrest's cavalry and march with this dauntless chieftain on Paducah, then in the hands of the Federal troops under General Smith. After a sharp engagement we took the town, but with only two six-pound guns, were unable to take the fort. Having there tasted the first sweets of victory and received our baptism of fire, we quitted the town, and having no further engagements scheduled, thirty or forty West Tennessee and Kentucky boys were given a ten days' furlough for the purpose of better fitting themselves out for the strenuous life ahead. I being one, hurried home to impart the glad tidings to my mother and to boast, of course, of our victory and the great part I had contributed thereto.

At the end of our furlough we hurried on back to our command, which was then at Holly Springs in Mississippi. We had been forewarned of the dangers of traveling by day, for the country was full of Federal troops and scouts, which made it necessary to do most of our traveling by night or by unguarded ways through the woods in the daytime.

Every town and hamlet along the Cumberland River was garrisoned by the enemy, which lent some spice and more

caution to our movements. We had now a dual necessity—one to save our necks, the other to rejoin our command, and we were exceedingly anxious to accomplish both, but just how this should be done was more than necessity had yet taught us. The whole country was scoured by Blue Coats and bristling with bayonets. The roads were closely guarded and the woods patrolled. But by swift and dextrous movements we managed to evade the enemy, and, coming to the Cumberland River, plunged in and swam our mounts across. Next the Tennessee River threatened our advance, but it proved as slight an obstacle as the Cumberland, and after a most exhilarating swim, we reached, as we thought, a country of safety. When we came in sight of Connorsville, Tenn., we rested up a bit to freshen our horses and to speculate on the possibilities of that town, too, being in the hands of the enemy. Our better judgment told us to sheer off, and we did, making a detour far to the right. When we came to a little eminence overlooking the town we beheld with little surprise that ever present tented village, and happily congratulated ourselves on the wisdom of our course. We hurried on, lulled to stupid inaction by a sense of false security, and as we journeyed in blissful ignorance of the danger that encompassed us on all sides, we were startled by the clatter of innumerable horses' hurrying feet, and looking round, beheld a company of Blue Coats in hot pursuit. To attempt to interest them with a passage at arms was quite out of the question, as there must have been several hundred of them, while there were only seven of us. We put spurs to our horses and there is no doubt that we would have won the handicap, but for another avalanche of Blue Coats bearing down upon us through a skirt of woods dead ahead. Our race course was a long lane with deep gullies on either side. To advance or retreat was suicide, and to attempt escape by either side seemed equally perilous, but it was our only chance and we quickly embraced it. My comrades sprang from their horses, descended and scaled the two precipitate banks, vaulted the fence and made for cover across a plowed field. But being a little too trustful of my horse's agility, I put spurs to him and made him reach out for the opposite side, which I think he would have gained but for a shower of bullets that

stunned him. His fore feet gained a footing, but with a groan he tumbled back into the deep gully. I don't know what became of him. As soon as his feet had hit the opposite bank, I rolled off and, grabbing a sassafras sapling, pulled my self up the red clay bank and in a little while was with my fleeing comrades. I have often heard it said that it's no disgrace to run if you are scared, and I guess that is what lent wings to my heels, for in a little while I was in the lead of my comrades, setting them a pace just to show them what I could do with the proper inducements.

Just why or how any of us ever escaped unhurt through this storm of lead certainly did not speak well for the enemy's target practice.

We were headed for a covert that bore the true earmarks of a vast woodland, but when we reached it, found to our dismay it was only a few yards wide and followed a briar infested marsh through the center of the field.

Being in the lead of the other boys, I called to them to come on, as our hoped for city of refuge was a snare and a delusion, but to my dismay I heard a voice behind me answer back: "We're all in, Kit. Go on and we will try to hold them at bay till night, then rejoin you." These were the last words I ever heard fall from the lips of my late comrade, Badge McGuire, as fine a young fellow as ever fell at the hands of assassins.

There was no use for me to rejoin my comrades and court a death that might be avoided. I could do them no good, nor myself. So I trusted to my sprinting qualities and kept up the flight.

The long race soon began to tell on me. My throat was dry to parching. My tongue rattled like a clapper against the arid walls of my mouth, the air was cutting my overworked lungs like a knife, but the victory was in sight, and this gave me strength to lope on like a tired fox. The bullets were falling shorter and shorter as space flew behind me, only an occasional minnie ball plowing up the ground around and ahead of me. I came at last to another fence all festooned with briars, and through their cruel barbs I tore my determined way, unmindful of the terrible slashings in my face, on my arms and legs and all over my per-

spiring body. Beyond that fence stretched the sheltering woods, and in those woods was safety.

I scrambled to the top of the fence with a feeling of exultance born of a triumph against such terrible odds, but I was not permitted to rejoice long, for before I had time to hit the ground, I beheld, to my amazement, a Federal officer not twenty yards away, tugging at his carbine, which was evidently caught in his gaudy trappings. Poor fellow. I shot as I jumped and gave him the dose he had in reserve for me.

At the crack of my pistol I saw him reel in his saddle, then pitch off sideways into the briars, but I did not stop to inquire his fate and I have never learned. I hope he recovered to tell the tale of his luckless adventure and get his name on the pension roll.

CHAPTER III.

CRUEL MURDER OF MY COMRADES—MY SOLITARY FLIGHT BACK INTO LOGAN COUNTY.

Sherman's definition of war is true from whatever angle it may be viewed, and no individual in the history of civilized warfare did more to make it so. The purpose of war is to kill and the object of its votaries is murder, sanctioned by Christian and pagan nations alike.

Those who enlist do so with the avowed purpose to kill men who have never done them an injury, and their destruction is only limited by possibilities.

In the nomenclature of all tongues and nations, war is classified and denominated by the methods used in its practice. Civilized, barbarous, savage, guerilla, bushwhacking, jayhawking and all methods of modern and ancient warfare have the same end and aim in view—death, devastation, pillage and plunder.

When the United States, smarting under the insubordination of some petty chief, plants a battery on a tumultuous reservation and sends a hardware store hurling through the tented village, our maroon brother is appalled at the barbarity of civilized warfare, and when that same battery is bushwhacked by the noble red man and a few curly locks of somebody's darling are hung to the girdle of the victor, civilization turns its pious eyes upward and loudly petitions heaven for vengeance, swift and terrible.

Civilized warfare is that method practiced by armies whose soldiers too often fight for pay in complete ignorance of the *causus belli*, and who look to the parent government for food and raiment and medical care while engaged in the struggle, and a wholesome pension when the strife is ended and a natural disinclination for manual labor has unfitted them for the more wholesome pursuits of honest gain by drawing a frazzled bell cord over the after deck of a Missouri mule.

Guerilla warfare is that method practiced by men who are in an ugly humor with the enemy and want to kill instead of capture, and who look to their own prowess for what pay they may receive for their services.



My early home life was spent on the farm in good old Kentucky where peace, good will and happiness reigned supreme.



Men who have never heard of a pension roll and who have no desire to receive an easy berth at the hands of the *surven* voter when the struggle is ended.

But leaden death from a high power rifle in the hands of a regular is just about as permanent as death from a blunderbuss in the hands of a jayhawker. The "regulars" who answer to taps and the reveille have no higher aim in view than to kill those who oppose them. I mean, of course, for the time being, but afterwards they are permitted to saddle the war horse of their "record" and nimbly prance into the fat emoluments of elective office.

I am ready to agree that guerilla warfare claims no kinship to a pink tea, but the guerilla does not fight for a price nor ask a pension of their fellow men when the flag of truce has silenced the deadly guns. He is a free lance—fights because he wants to hurt somebody and makes the enemy support him while he is engaged in their destruction.

I have served as a regular and as a guerilla. I have served against "regulars" and against every form of Yankee guerilla—from the gallant scout to the Kansas Red Leg, and I say in all fairness, after many years' service and strife, that the guerilla methods are no more reprehensible than that of a regular army. There is no more moral wrong in a small body of men seeking to take advantage of another small body than there is in a vast army seeking to outmanoeuver another army of equal importance. They are both after the enemy's throat and they will get it if the opportunity offers. A sleeve made empty by a "regular" is just about as awkward an arrangement as one made vacant by a guerilla. But, back to the records.

After the incidents recorded in the last chapter, I sought a safe refuge from my pursuers in the depths of the forest, where I slacked my thirst in a stagnant pool, from the top of which I was first forced to rake away the ooze and slime that most likely would have poisoned me, then sat beneath a spreading oak, on a high elevation, from which eminence I could hear the rattle of musketry in the valley below and see the vast columns of smoke roll away to the far-off sage fields and settle, or drift lazily through the trees that sheltered my desperately fighting companions, and I knew that little band of six untrained and unhardened

country boys, who in all their lives had never killed anything bigger or more desperate than a rabbit, were holding two companies of the enemy at bay. The fusilades continued for more than an hour, then all was silent as the grave.

With an aching heart I sat alone in that sheltering wood, waiting, watching and listening for what sight or sound might come to me on the wings of the wind, but the silence gave no token and only a hush like the silence of death brooded over all, and the winds in the trees above me sighed like the moaning of lost spirits. Half an hour later I heard a volley, then another and another, till six in all were fired, and I knew they had been firing by platoons. I saw the white puffs of smoke on the distant hill mount upward and roll above the field of carnage like billows of despair; then all was silent again.

Poor boys! How unspeakably horrible was their tragic end. To them the strife had ended before their guileless hearts knew the bitterness of hate or the rancor of malice. How I pitied them then, but, oh, how many's the time I have envied them their peaceful rest since that terrible day. After the enemy had withdrawn and taken their dead with them, I visited the scene of their perfidy with the view to locating the bodies of my comrades, but they, too, had been carted off.

An hour later I learned that the Federals had promised to treat them as prisoners of war if they would surrender. This they did, but the sequence told the tale of their infamous treachery.

The next day, Blaylock, captain of the home guard, took the vest of one of his victims, a Mr. Brandon, and flaunting it in the face of the heart-broken mother, showed her with malicious pride, four bullet holes in that part of the garment which had covered his brave young heart.

Now, this Blaylock was not a Yankee, but a Southern, self-branded demon—one of those carnivorous freaks who thought the only way to promotion lay through the slaughter pen wherein his late neighbors were helplessly corralled.

I have faced many a Northern foe, bushwhacked against many jayhawkers and encountered the Kansas Red Legs, but none so inhuman, so remorseless, so thirsty for human

gore as this cadaverous nondescript, whose distorted heart craved crime as the price of his brief authority.

Just how many fell before the terrible fire of those plucky boys in the thicket will never be known, for it was a trick of the home guard to hide its casualties whenever it could, lest other scouts, emboldened by *their* reverses, take it into their heads to do them a like service. But it is safe to say their casualties were so great Blaylock, smarting under the terrible blow, ordered the massacre in violation of all the rules of both civilized and savage warfare.

When night came on I gathered up my wits, which was the only baggage I had, save one pistol, and started out, hardly having in mind any destined end or way. In a distant wood I saw a faint light flicker, like a far-off star on the border of earth and sky, and towards this flaming torch I bent my solitary way. Soon the ruddy glow of the light moulded itself into a flickering flame, revealing the dim, uncertain outlines of a window, then a log cabin stood out in the gloom like the trysting place of ghouls. As I drew nearer and nearer I heard the gentle voice of a mother caressing her babe, and listened with rapturous delight at its musical cooing as it answered back the fond caress.

A long time I waited under the eaves of the house, listening for unfriendly sounds, but as none disturbed the hallowed scene, I walked up to the door and knocked.

"Who is it?" came a call from the mother inside.

"A stranger, madam, who wants to get into the Connerville road, if you will be kind enough to direct me," I answered.

"Where are you from?" she asked.

I hesitated a moment, then deciding to take chances with the truth, I said: "Madam, to be perfectly candid with you, I am a Confederate soldier in distress."

As soon as the words "Confederate soldier" reached her eager ears, she ran to the door and, throwing it wide open, said: "Come in, sir. All Confederate soldiers are welcome here."

"But I can not come in, madam," I said, "for to do so might bring disaster on both of us. If you will give me the directions I need, I'll bid you good night and be on my way." Then I stepped in the light that streamed through

the open door, she caught sight of my pitiable condition, and uttering an exclamation, said: "You are wounded, young man; badly wounded. You must come in and let me do something for you."

I assured her my wounds did not count for much, as they came from briars and brambles, but to all my dissenting she turned a deaf ear, and said: "Your clothing is torn to shreds, young man, and you are bloody from head to foot. I cannot think of letting you go without doing something for you. My husband is a Confederate and has gone up to Coniersville to sit up with the remains of the poor boys who were shot down like wild beasts in front of my house this afternoon." Then she related the terrible fate of my late companions and told how Badge McGuire, Ike Burtle, Nath Brandon, Captain Foster, Jim Coleman and John Albright had held the enemy at bay and how they had surrendered on promise of Blaylock that they would be treated as prisoners of war, and how they had been shot down in cold blooded murder.

I could not hide the deep emotions that possessed me at this awful recital, and seeing my agitation, she asked: "Are you the one that escaped across the field?"

I told her I was, to which she replied: "Then you are Kit Dalton from Kentucky. My husband knows your people."

"How do you know that I am Kit Dalton?" I asked.

"I heard the captain who ordered the murder of your companions say: 'We have let the most vicious whelp of hell's brood escape. I would rather have captured Kit Dalton and hung him to that blackjack tree than to kill the entire six.'"

After acquainting me with the whole affair of the afternoon, she added: "Just wait a minute, Mr. Dalton, and let me get you a clean shirt. The one you have on is nothing but bloody rags." Saying this, she disappeared and returned a moment later with one of her husband's hickory stripe shirts, and passing it over to me, said: "Put that on and let me burn yours."

I thanked her, and forthwith began to array myself in fresh apparel, and pretty soon Kit Dalton, of one hundred and twenty pounds avoirdupois, was on the inside of the

shirt of Mr. Stone, a gentleman who easily tipped the beam at two twenty-five. After having reached the latitude and longitude of the garment as best I could, there still remained enough unoccupied space to accommodate another Kit Dalton without bringing the gentlemen into too close relations with each other. But it was sound and had no briars attached to the inside to harrow my already tortured back, and was highly acceptable.

After Mrs. Stone had fitted me out in this comical garb, she prepared me a cold lunch and, wishing me God's speed, added: "I hope you will live to even up matters with those brutes, Mr. Dalton."

"I thank you most heartily for your kindness and good wishes, Mrs. Stone, and I promise you on the word of a grateful Confederate soldier that Captain Blaylock shall pay dearly for this outrage."

Then, taking my leave, I hurried on.

Midnight came and found me slowly plodding through the lowlands leading into the valley of the Tennessee, shrouded by a darkness that could almost be felt.

I got into the tall timber as the birds of prey were holding their infernal orgies, and filling the air with their fearful clangor and piercing screams. In the distance I could hear the shrill cry of a panther as he called his mate through the spectral gloom, and further away, towards the hills, I could hear a wolf's plaintive howl as he bayed the midnight stars and called his prowling consort from the trail. Overhead the night winds whispered their tales of solitude and rose to a melancholy wail as I sank deeper and deeper into the forest wilds, and ever as I journeyed I thought of the poor boys lying stiff and stark on cooling boards in Conniersville, who would have been with me then if they had only listened to my warning.

It was never in my nature to trust the enemy any further than I could fly. I have been requested time and time again to surrender to overpowering numbers, but I judge the instincts of the scout were born in me, and I could never see the advisability of throwing myself on the enemy's mercy instead of his neck. I have always trusted more to my good *aim* than to the enemy's good intentions, and by this method I have lived through many a stormy period,

while, one by one, I have seen my comrades gathered to their fathers because of their trust in the promises of a foe who knew not the meaning of the words honor or mercy.

What a day I had lived in the hills! What a night of terror was upon me in the interminable valley of the Tennessee! It seemed that the day had been one long dream of terror and the night an eternity of gloom and dark forebodings.

I came at last to the lonely river, asleep within its emerald walls, and the midnight stars danced upon its quiet waters. What a sacrilege it seemed to break that drowsy spell and stain the limpid waters with the blood of war. But my destination was many miles beyond, for I had now determined to return home, get a new mount and rejoin my command without violating my furlough. I plunged in and when I was about midstream, my laboring hand touched a cold, slimy object asleep on the water, and at the touch he waked with a mighty flounder, which whirled me completely around. I could not tell in the black darkness which way my course lay, but I felt much like the man who, holding to the bottom of a wheel, said: "It makes no difference which way she turns, I'll come out on top." I was in the middle of the stream and it made no difference which way I went, I would reach the bank.

After several minutes tight swimming, my hand touched the muddy edge of the river bed and I was safe, but on which side, I could not for the life of me tell. But I climbed out and, catching a glimpse of a red star through a rift in the overhanging foliage, knew that red star should be beyond the opposite bank. I had landed, in all likelihood, within a few feet of the place where I had plunged into the water. It was a case of love's sweet labor lost, but I still had a quantity in reserve and lost no time putting it into use. A few heavy pulls brought me safe across, and when I struck against the old ferry boat, tied up to the bank and no boatman aboard, I felt that I had something to my credit, for in case I should be pursued I would have ample time to hide out before my pursuers could whoop up the ferryman and have the boat pulled across for them, then back again.

With what little comfort these reflections brought me, I hurried on towards the Cumberland, where, in all likeli-

hood, I would have to once more trust my body to the tender mercies of Neptune, or who ever it is that controls the waters under the earth.

When I reached the river my strength was pretty much exhausted, and I had some misgivings regarding a passage across, for I could tell by the murmuring of the water that the current was too stiff for my waning strength, wherefore it was the part of discretion to press some dumb servant into action, and, accordingly, I hunted up a few dry poles, which I lashed together with my home knit suspenders and, trusting myself to this frail craft, eased out into the stream and made a safe landing.

The refreshing waters acted like balm on my lacerated body and gave me strength and hope to journey on and on.

When the early song birds waked the dewy morn and the first aureole of light streaked the eastern sky, I sought a safe place in a jungle, far to the right of the road, and no sooner was the light again shut out from my tired eyes, than I fell into a sleep from which I did not awaken until the sun was far down behind the cypress trees. When darkness overtook me again I was on a hill overlooking my uncle's humble home, and gladness filled my breast when I thought of the friendly faces I would once more see and the hearty welcome that would be mine.

CHAPTER III.

CRUEL MURDER OF MY UNCLE, WILLIAM HENSELEY—SETTLEMENT DAY WITH BLAYLOCK, HIS MURDERER.

Despite the fact that I had sat up till the small hours of the morning, relating my adventures to my uncle and his household and having my wounds carefully dressed by the tender hands of his heroic wife, I was up betimes the next morning and felt as well as a person could feel with a pound of butter and other oily ointments massaged into every pore of his skin. But I had to keep in mind that I was a soldier and had so elected to be against the wishes of my mother, and I firmly resolved never to complain of my lot, no matter how bad it may be. Acting on this determination, I tried to appear perfectly indifferent to my condition, though every step caused an internal groan and every motion of my body a stifled cry.

My uncle, in the bigness of his soul, furnished me with a shotgun and a good mount, and in giving me his benedictions as we parted, he added: "Fight 'em fair, my boy. Cowards assassinate, but brave men meet the enemy face to face."

"My policy will be to fight the devil with fire, uncle," I replied. Then, after a second's reflection, I added: "My comrades were foully murdered. If I can even up the score with Blaylock and his bunch of cut throats I certainly don't intend to take any ethical dots from Knight Errantry. When the opportunity offers I intend to get even with every member of the home guard, and if the opportunity is a little reticent about offering its services, I will make an opportunity, and as sure as there is an avenging God, just so sure will Blaylock get his just desserts. He's destined to fall at my hands."

"Blaylock is a very dangerous man, my boy. I believe if the Federals knew what a red-handed murderer he is, they would dismiss him from the service. I believe they want soldiers and not murderers. I fear for the lives of my neighbors as long as this man Blaylock is alive, for he will not hesitate to kill, and that without warrant or reason. If you

intend to operate against this assassin, be very cautious and trust nothing to his promises."

This was wholesome advice, but I didn't need it, for I knew only too well what this demon was and what he would do for his own personal ends, and I promised my uncle by everything good and evil that I would never leave the country again until Blaylock had settled his bloody account for the dastardly murder of my companions.

I left him then and journeyed on to my mother's, where I recited my misadventures to all the neighbors, who came in secretly to welcome my return to the settlement.

A few days after my arrival in Logan County, news came to me that Blaylock had visited my uncle in the dead of the preceding night, arrested the inoffensive old man on some pretext and hurried him off to the Federal headquarters for trial, and that they had not gotten more than two hundred yards from the house, when Blaylock turned on my uncle, who was manacled like a felon, and said to him: "You are an uncle of Kit Dalton, who, to, my mind, is going to give our patriots more trouble than any rascal in the settlement. Being his uncle, you are, of course, in sympathy with him and will aid him in every secret way you can, and for this you have earned a traitor's death."

"Kit is my sister's son, Mr. Blaylock, and I—"

"Captain Blaylock, if you've got the time," said the infuriated monster, and with this he dealt the old man a cruel blow in the face, which he could not resent, being handcuffed and rendered helpless.

"A child could slap my face, Mr. Blaylock, and I could not resent it. It is no credit to you to take this dirty advantage of a helpless prisoner. Your actions are the actions of a coward, sir. Brave men do not mistreat prisoners." That was the last sentence ever uttered by the old man, for the words had barely escaped his lips when Blaylock became obsessed by the evil nature of a hundred demons and, wheeling on him with a horrible oath, filled his brave old heart with a load of buckshot from a double barreled shotgun, whereupon his horse took fright and returned home unmolested.

My aunt heard the patter of the animal's hurrying feet and went to the gate, where she found him shaking with

terror and with one of her husband's brogans still in the stirrup. Blaylock had not given the old man time to lace them on his feet.

My aunt, already in terror for her husband's safety, gathered up her eight little girls, one a baby in her arms, and, rushing down the road with frantic screams, found the dead man lying in the middle of the road.

When our visitor had finished his recital there was not a dry eye in the room—with the exception of my own. I had no inclination to cry. My heart seemed to be frozen or turned to stone, and my nature knew no sentiment but a craving for revenge.

"I'll let you all hear from me later," I said, as I arose without further explanation, saddled my horse and struck out on my mission.

An hour later I had found one of my friends, whom I knew to be cool of nerve and steady of aim, and having told him of my uncle's sad fate, asked him to go with me to avenge the murder. Without a moment's hesitation he said: "I'm ready, Kit, and God pity that infamous bunch."

The following evening we were en route to Blaylock's headquarters, which was also his double log cabin home, where he and his gang of assassins met to discuss the most heinous methods of disposing of rebels and with the aid of the devil hatched up excuses for murdering inoffensive old men and robbing helpless widows in the name of the Stars and Stripes.

That's the type of civilized warfare they were waging against us on the border, and I resolved then and there to pay them back in their own coin, with compound interest, and lawyer's fees attached.

A pale, slender moon hung just above the tree tops as we came in sight of Blaylock's home, and extra caution was necessary to avoid detection, and for this reason we hitched our horses in a little skirt of woods back of the barn, and with our double barreled guns slipped up noiseless behind a big wood pile and there awaited developments. We were then close enough to hear every word uttered by that bloody handed aggregation of hellions, and though we could almost locate Blaylock by his fog horn voice, we were not sure enough of his location to open hostilities.

As we lay there in wait for the opportunity we sought, I could distinctly hear Blaylock as he opened up a tirade against me for the little part I played in that escapade where all my companions were so foully butchered. He was telling how he *lowed* to ketch Curly Dalton and subject him to a torturing death, and as he suggested plans and methods, his cowardly followers would cheer him on by their loud haw haws, and now and then add some feature of barbarity to the scheme which their leader had overlooked.

Still we held our fire. I had told my companion to leave Blaylock to me, as it was my greatest desire to put him out of the way before I did anything else in the world, and had I known then that it would have been my last act, I would not have hesitated to carry out my determination to the letter.

We were getting impatient for action, but still we waited, and in a few minutes a woman came out from a doorway leading into the passage where the rascals were assembled, and in her hand she carried a candle, unconsciously lighting the captain's way through the dim shadows into a country where a tallow candle could not endure but a short time. The light fell full on his malignant face, revealing a pair of evil eyes that shone with vicious hate, and I could see him affectionately caressing his long beard and ever and anon pull them out of harm's way as he ejected vast quantities of tobacco juice through his parted fingers. That was the opportunity I long had sought. Revenge was mine and no opera buffet villain in a dime melodrama ever chuckled with more fiendish delight than I did at the contemplation of the happy work ahead of me. Slipping my gun noiselessly through a crack in the fence, I aimed it at the dim shadow in the dark passageway and pulled both triggers. At the terrible explosion there was a furious commotion in that vestibule, but before the counsellors of the black bearded imp could determine what to do, we opened fire with our pistols, and when the battle was ended thirteen of the twenty assassins had paid the price of their heartless crime against my old uncle. Blaylock was the first to pay for his awful crime, and I have no doubt that his injuries were of such a nature that he was rendered hors du combat

for all time to come, as my gun was loaded with slugs of lead as big as the barrel of the gun could swallow.

We then ran to the horse lot, where we took possession of the twenty horses, which we drove off ahead of us, but in the darkness of the night nine of them escaped, leaving us with eleven good mounts, which was a good starter for the company I purposed organizing to bushwhack against the enemy as they were jayhawking against us.

I learned afterwards that only twelve of the home guard's wounded succumbed to their injuries, the other having recovered and in all likelihood is now on the pension roll, enjoying a bounty which he no wise earned.

The seven who escaped uninjured reported a few days later that they had been attacked by one hundred and fifty men, but just how they arrived at such a conclusion is more than I have been able to figure out. They stated that they stubbornly held their ground for a full half an hour, but were powerless to resist such overwhelming numbers.

Having effectively disposed of Blaylock, I returned to the old settlement, where I raised a company of twenty-eight fine young fellows, and with this grand army at my command, I felt equal to almost any undertaking.

A few days later, as I was scouting through the country with my little army of "irregulars," news came to us that the Yankees had made a raid on old Major Bush's home, killed a young hired man in bed and cruelly beat the inoffending old man and his grown daughter because of their protests against such outrages as the rascals were committing. The tragedy had just been enacted and the trail was hot. There were several roads by which the miscreants could make their get-away, and in order to be sure of my quarry, I sent a little band through the woods in all directions to intercept them and shoot them down from secret places, just like so many hyenas. With two of my men I took another route, and hurrying our horses to their full strength, cut them off about five miles from the scene of their crime, and, as I had every reason to believe, they were the garrison at Center Star, and must, of necessity, come that way to get back to headquarters, we three hitched our horses back from the road and slipping cautiously up near the highway, awaited in a clump of bushes for their arrival.

In a few minutes we could hear the jolly revellers way down the road and they seemed not in the least hurried for fear of apprehension, but jogged along leisurely, discussing the profits of their marauding expedition. The leader was a big husky, with sandy hair and a voice like a maddened bullock. The loot was in his possession, to be divided when they should rejoin their command.

When they were along side of us, the three of us opened fire simultaneously and three mounted footpads bit the dust. Then three more followed suit and the rest sought safety in flight, without returning a single shot. The leader was the first to fall, and I feel no compunctions of conscience at the thought that it was my heavy army pistol that checked his earthly pilgrimage forever. Out of the fifteen, seven tumbled from their saddles in blissful unconsciousness of the cause that brought them to their justly deserved end. The others escaped, but two of them managed to get in connection with the pension roll, where, in all likelihood, their descendants are still swinging to the public rudder.

We recovered all the loot, and when we returned it to its rightful owner, the old major's joys knew no bounds. He quickly spread a feast for us, which, I must admit, was worth the price we had paid for it. When the survivors returned to their command they reported being fired on by two hundred bushwhackers and that they left forty of them dead in the woods. My, my! What a wholesale destruction of three green country boys!

We had reason, however, to be thankful for this fabrication, for I have no doubt the timid garrison was too much appalled by the overwhelming numbers reported to them to attempt to avenge their comrades. As soon as we had finished up our feast, where the entire command had assembled, we began to discuss plans for making a raid on the garrison at Center Star, and speedily put them into execution.

It was just about 12 o'clock of a dark night when we made a sudden dash on the sleeping garrison and before they could brush the sleep from their eyes we were in their midst, riding down tents and shooting everything that walked upright like a man.

It was all over in a few minutes and forty-two gallant

gents ceased then and there forever to draw their monthly pay and rations. The government ought to have voted us a tribute of thanks for thus relieving it of such an unnecessary expense, for the entire garrison was not worth the monthly allowance of tobacco that was allotted to them.

There were fifty-eight of the garrison who made good their escape, and I judge from other reports they sent in to headquarters that they must have reported being attacked by the entire Southern army.

After this little escapade we took possession of such munitions and arms as suited us, destroyed the balance and set fire to the wigwams. Time was when border dwellers stood amazed at the bold adventures of Kit Dalton's little band of savage fighters and little children on the other side of the mythical fence learned to regard us in the same category with Yahoo and Bloody Bones, but on our side, Kit Dalton's name was revered, honored and respected as a deliverer, for our people knew I was fighting their cause and though I fought by no prescribed rules of warfare, my work was effectual, and those who fell victims to our fierce assaults were as effectually disposed of as though they had met their fate at the hands of regulars in pitched battles. My little band not only fought for our country, but we foraged among the enemy and the fruits of our labors went to gladden the hearts of starving women and children, whose husbands and fathers were at the front or lying in windrows or in crowded ditches on some deserted battlefield.

I do not believe the Federals had a more implacable enemy than in me, nor one who individually contributed more to their discomfort, nor do I believe the South contained a single soul who contributed more to her needs than I did. I fought the enemy hip and thigh, and the spoils of war I scattered throughout that zone which stood most in need of help. But what I did, I did it in my own way, prescribed my own course, preyed on the enemy throughout the long conflict, nor cost my government one *sou markee*.

In those days, it must be remembered, I was a soldier, not an outlaw; a patriot, not a bandit. Those unhappy appellations were justly attached to me after the strife was over and I was not permitted to live and act as other men, which will be explained later.

CHAPTER V.

MEETING WITH WEBSTER, OF WEBSTER'S GUERRILLAS—CAPTURE OF A RIVER PACKET— PRISONERS, FOUL AND FAIR.

After the Center Star raid, Captain Webster of Webster's guerilla's came out of the mountains of East Tennessee on foraging expeditions, and after a little parley with this dauntless gentleman, we joined affinity, and with our united forces gave the enemy all the excitement they wanted. We soon formulated plans for harassing the enemy on a more extensive scale, and planned a raid beyond the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers in West Kentucky, where opportunities for work in our line was never wanting.

The day following the maturing of our plans we started out with our forces of forty men and came to the Cumberland River, five miles above Dover, which we were fording, when one of my men caught the faint sounds of a lazy chow, chow, far down the river. The likes of it he had never heard before, but to me it was the old, familiar sounds of a river steamboat laboring its way up the strong current. I hastily called to Webster, who had already crossed the river, to take his horses and hide them in the woods and to come on back to the river bank and lay low till time to get busy. This he did, and having disposed my own men in like manner, we patiently awaited the arrival of the boat.

On came the clumsy vessel, the black billows of smoke curling from her stacks and the strong current parting against her bow in great billows of foam. Where we were stationed, the navigable channel could not have been more than thirty feet wide, which challenged the pilot for all his skill. When the vessel was midway of the narrows, I called to the pilot to stop, but thinking I was only a citizen who wanted passage up the river, he announced that he had orders not to stop.

"But you will have to stop," I commanded. "We are going to take possession of your vessel. I demand your surrender, sir, in the name of the—"

"In the name of the devil," he interrupted; then added: "What are you giving me, kid? Back to the bushes!"

Then calling to my men, I ordered them to fire on the vessel and crew, which they readily did, but the pilot, being a plucky fellow, ordered more steam ahead. I heard the tingle of little bells in the engine room and the exhaust from the pipes became louder and faster. By this time the captain of the vessel was on deck, accompanied by fifteen or twenty blue coats, and they all opened fire on the bleak woods. But we soon silenced them and drove them all below, where they remained and cracked down on us whenever they could.

Seeing the vessel about to get through her narrow passage, and knowing what a time we would have trying to capture her when once her nose had gotten into the broad, straight channel, I ordered a volley sent into the pilot house. The pilot ducked in time to save himself and hung tenaciously to the wheel. Then I ordered Jim Lunn, who had an old Belgian rifle that carried a ball the size of a hickory nut, to shoot the steam pipes. Jim cracked down, reloaded and cracked down again and again, but the pipes were unmolested and the vessel kept churning on and her big stern wheel was pounding the water into foam.

The next volley through the walls of the pilot house brought the pilot to a realization of his precarious condition, and the next second I heard more bells jingling in the engine room and the vessel hauled to. I ordered crew, passengers and soldiers all ashore, put them under guard, and formally took charge of the vessel. Then I ordered the crew to unload the cargo, and in a few minutes the banks were lined with all sorts of army supplies, blankets, boots, clothing, guns and ammunition, and foodstuffs by the ton. It was a rich capture, though there was very little in the outfit that my soldiers could use. However, we had many a friend back in the country who could use everything, and to those we sent word to bring in their wagons, which they did, and in a few hours there was a long convoy laboring over the rugged roads, laden with more provisions and luxuries than had ever gone over that road in all its existence.

The captain of the vessel asked me what were my intentions with respect to his vessel, and when I advised him I would fire it, he begged most piteously against its destruction, telling me it was his first trip up the river as

captain, as he had just been promoted from first mate to that dignified position. I told him that I regretted very much the necessity which compelled me to destroy his vessel and told him, as man to man, I would be glad to see him pull safely through and earn his promotion, but as a captain in the Confederate cause, I would have to do a captain's unpleasant duty.

When everything our neighbors could use was taken from the vessel, I ordered the torch, and soon the little transport was a mass of flames. The tie ropes were burnt in two, the vessel drifted to midstream, where she listed, then the swirling waters swallowed her up, leaving only the smoke stacks to mark the place where she rested on the muddy bottom. The blockade was complete and more serviceable by far than the blockade of Santiago Bay by the Merrimac, which was sunk by the daring Hobson in the Spanish-American war, or the Tallahatchie River, above Greenwood, in Mississippi, by the sinking of the Star of the West.

Seeing their vessel disappear from sight, and being now concerned for their own safety, the military captain asked me what were my intentions with regard to my prisoners.

I told him we had no use for prisoners, for we had no fort and nothing to feed prisoners on, and for this reason I would ask them to sign their paroles, when they were at liberty to go where they chose.

When I had made it plain to them that they were not going to be murdered, they were the happiest bunch of people I have ever encountered in all my life, and expressed themselves as being both grateful and surprised. One of our lady prisoners, having a pretty keen sense of the ridiculous, approached me and said: "And you don't eat 'em alive, captain?"

To which I pleasantly replied: "No, they are too tough, but if I were a cannibal chieftain, your fate would certainly be an unhappy one."

At this little pleasantry she uttered a merry chuckle and said: "Aren't you Captain Dalton, of those terrible guerillas?"

"To which I replied: "Guerillas eat 'em alive, don't they?"

"We read all sorts of things about the guerillas," she said; "but I don't believe they are as blood thirsty as they are represented."

"No, they are not savages or cannibals. Look around you and see if there's a man in my command who impresses you as a demon."

She looked around critically, taking in the entire forty, and replied: "No, they seem to be pretty genteel fellows, but you are Captain Dalton, now, aren't you?"

"I am his friend, madam, and am a guerilla—as terrible as the word may sound to you. You have seen a band of guerillas in action. They have treated you and your companions as rudely as they ever treated captives in their whole career. You can judge better now what a guerilla is."

"I think better of them, captain, and as a souvenir I want a cutting of that drake's tail on your forehead. I will cherish it as a souvenir."

Well, she got her souvenir all right, but we could waste no more time on our prisoners, as pleasant as some of them were, so I had the ladies and soldiers all put in the yawls that had been saved from the vessel for the purpose, put a couple of good oarsmen in each boat, and had them pushed off into the current.

"Good bye, captain," said my fair prisoner; "I hope I may capture you one of these days, just to show you how nicely I can return a favor."

"I think you done done it, Miss," yelled the loud mouthed Jim Lun, at which captors and captives joined in a hearty laugh at my expense.

Soon the skiffs were headed down the stream and the last I saw of my little lady admirer, if I may be bold enough to call her such, she was throwing me a kiss from the point of her delicate fingers, and I have to own up that they were heart stirring, though silent, little messengers. Thus it was we captured and destroyed our first and only vessel, and thus ended my first romance. If the little lady is living today and these pages should fall into her hands, now old and withered by the unkindly touch of time, I send her in these lines my greetings and best wishes, in which my most loving and faithful wife heartily joins me.

When the news of the destruction of that vessel was noised

abroad, the Federals were so incensed against the guerillas that they doubled their efforts to capture them, and for this purpose brought in another battalion of Blue Coats to eat out the substance of the old and infirm, the widows and orphans, and in every way possible, made their stay in the garrisons round about obnoxious to all decent and self-respecting men. I was severely roasted for the destruction of the vessel, notwithstanding the fact that every day on the seas the two contending navies made this a regular business. It is nothing more nor less than has been practiced on the high seas since the time of the Argonauts, and will be practiced for the rest of time. It was Semmes' trade and Winslow's vocation. It was a passtime of the blockading vessels along the eastern seaboard, and Farragut's chief amusement in Mobile Bay. It is the business end of war and was strictly attended to by Perry, John Paul Jones, Decatur, Dewey and Schley. It all resolves itself into the axiom of the ages, "I can't and you shan't." The dog in the manger set the example.

When the work of destruction was over and we were left alone to contemplate the labor of our hands, I asked Jim Lunn why he had not obeyed orders and shot the steam pipe in two, to which he replied, with an air of considerable self-importance: "I done it, cap. Shore's you're born I done it."

"You did nothing of the sort," I replied.

"I didn't, did I? Look at them three holes and see how you like 'em."

Saying which, he pointed to the stacks that stuck up above the water, and there, just a few inches above the water line, I saw three immense holes torn clear through the stacks, which Jim, in his ignorance, had mistaken for steam pipes.

It was a long time before Jim ever heard the last of this ludicrous blunder, but in his broad good nature he took it kindly, and still clung to the satisfying thought that "he done his best."

CHAPTER VI. THE CLARKSVILLE RAID.

If there were a man in the entire Confederate service more alive to his patriotic duty than Captain Webster, I did not chance to run across him. His sinews seemed gutta percha, his muscles bundles of wire and his endurance like iron. There was nothing so tiresome to him as rest, nothing so irksome as inaction, nothing so charming as the quest of danger, nothing so delightfully exhilarating as a swift passage at arms.

In the midnight assault or the pitched battle in the broad, open light of day, Webster was always on hand, plowing roads of death through the ranks of the enemy with a seeming delight that inspired courage in his comrades and struck terror to the opposing hosts.

It was this hot spur who suggested our next adventure, which was a raid on Clarksville, garrisoned by about one hundred men, though we had no way of knowing how many Blue Coats infested that village. That, however, counted for little, for whenever we decided on one of those expeditions, opposing numbers never entered the reckoning. The greater the number, the greater our chances for damage to Federal arms. If we discovered after we had gotten into the melee that the odds against us were insurmountable, we would make a mad and furious dash, deal out as much destruction as we could, then make our get-away before they were prepared to offer any resistance.

We reached Clarksville between sundown and dark and caught the garrison totally unprepared for our reception. They were lolling about on the cool, mossy banks of the river, or rolling about on the grassy plots beneath the spreading trees, smoking their after-supper pipes, singing songs of the old folk lore and in other ways enjoying life to the fullest measure, having no suspicion how soon the smoking pipes would give place to smoking guns and songs of gladness to wails of distress.

Before they had any suspicion of a nearby enemy, we were right in their midst, pouring a deadly fire into their scattered ranks and yelling like so many demons escaped

from the tombs, and doing what we could to strike terror to their hearts.

Not knowing what numbers opposed them, the troops became panic stricken and sought shelter in whatever way they could. They scattered like sheep with a wolf in the midst of the fold, and each man trusted to his prowess for escape. Some ran helter skelter into the thick woods, while others, afraid to trust themselves behind any rampart save distance, sought to place that safe obstruction between them and the attacking forces as fast as possible.

One foolish fellow, evidently forgetful of what species of creation he belonged to, mistook himself for a bull frog, and leaped with a loud splash from the high bank into the river, and I must say he did credit to the cold blooded tribe he was representing. But he must have mistaken himself for a gazelle when he reached the opposite side, for none could have scaled that precipitous bank and made a more graceful get-away than he did.

When he jumped into the water some of the boys up the river sighted him and began to yell at me to shoot him, as he was right under my gun, but I would as soon have thought of shooting an old woman or a babe. Possibly if I had known him to be one of the notorious home guard, I might have plugged him, but to shoot a human being down in that cold blooded manner was something that never entered my mind. If the gentleman is living today, he will remember the incident, and I trust will come forward and acknowledge this little courtesy.

We captured the town without much of an effort, only losing two men, while their loss was in the thirties, to say nothing of the wounded who escaped.

We also captured a few prisoners, whom we released on their paroles—a very courteous and chivalrous act in warfare, wherein the giver gets the best of the bargain, though I have no doubt that those who may have been the recipient of such courtesies will take issue with me. I was never captured, consequently never paroled, wherefore I could not sit in judgment on such a question.

But this I do know, a guerilla has no more use for prisoners than a hog has of a side saddle.

At this time we were not fighting under the black flag

and could, without violating guerilla ethics, take prisoners ad libitum or suffer ourselves to be taken, if we so elected. Our sable pennant was not hoisted till long afterwards and not then until we had suffered such decimation by that border treachery, where *patriotism* stalked under the Stars and Stripes and raised the black pall of death over its helpless prisoners. These were the blackest crimes that ever stained a nation's honor, yet I lay no blame to the Northern army as a whole. They fought to win—just as we did. I cherish no animosity against my old time enemy, for the same spirit animated them that stirred our souls to action. The only bitterness I have ever felt was against that infamous home guard, and most of that bitterness was buried when Blaylock was securely fastened down "to be a brother to the insensible rock and to the sluggish clod," which he polluted with his treacherous body.

Blaylock paid the price levied against perfidy in the only manner fitting the deed, and now, looking back through the lapse of years, I recall many acts of folly I sincerely regret, the Blaylock incident does not appear on the mental list. I would sooner regret the destruction of a mad dog, and I feel that I am due apologies to the dog for the odious comparison. Blaylock it was who sowed the dragon's teeth in my path that rose up against me in the long, bitter years and destroyed the most useful years of my life, for had there been no Blaylock, there had been no outlaw by the name of Kit Dalton, who, masquerading under many names, ever fought as one demon to kill those who opposed him.

I freely admit I did not love the enemy and he had a pretty correct idea of my sentiments toward him, and I'm strongly minded that he did not waste any of the blessed sentiment on me.

After the route at Clarksville, we kept up our scouting with such energy that the Federals sent in more recruits to stop our depredations, and the times that followed their advent into the community were lively enough in all faith.

Soon after the Clarksville incident the dauntless Quantrell appeared on the scene on a raid through East Tennessee and Kentucky for the purpose of recruiting his command and obtaining a new supply of horses, which he hoped to obtain at the expense of the enemy.

As soon as he was in my zone of operations he sent runners out in search of me, for my exploits had been narrated to him in the far off west. At the time I had no more idea of his whereabouts than he of mine, else the search had been useless, for had I known he was anywhere east of the Mississippi River I would have gone to him as fast as my horse could carry me.

I remember well, through the long lapse of years, my first sight of a real Quantrell man. Two of them, in search of me, rode up to the little town of New Providence, and I heard one of them ask: "Can any of you gentlemen tell me where I might find Captain Kit Dalton?"

"What do you want with him?" came the surly answer.

"I am a lieutenant in the Confederate service, gentlemen, and I bring a message to Captain Dalton," he said politely.

"That's him, settin' on the bench over there, a-whittlin'," replied the citizen, as he indicated my presence by a backward motion of his thumb.

The lieutenant rode up before the little shack of a store where I was sitting, along with several others, and asked: "Is Captain Kit Dalton among you, gentlemen?"

"Kit Dalton, at your service, sir," I said with a military salute.

The wonderment that manifested itself on his handsome young face was truly comical. He sat his horse transfixed, without even returning my salute. But he finally got the hinges of his jaw in operation and said politely: "Beg pardon, sir; but I was inquiring for Captain Kit Dalton, of Dalton's Guerillas."

Captain Kit Dalton, sir, at the command of any officer in gray," I replied, airily, again giving the military salute.

"What? You Kit Dalton—Captain Kit Dalton—the genuine Kentucky brewed terror? Aren't you mistaken? Perhaps you are his little sister, masquerading in his jeans. Where's your big bud?"

A winning smile went with his words that disarmed malice, and I as pleasantly replied: "I'm the genuine Kit Dalton, sir, whatever that may indicate. Can I serve you?"

"Well, I'll be blanked," he said with a tinge of irony;

then, doffing his cap in true military style, he continued "Captain Dalton, Quantrell's lieutenant salutes you."

At the mention of that magic name I sprang forward grasped his outstretched hand and warmly pressed it in fraternal amity.

Then he made known to me Quantrell's wishes, and I lost no time joining myself to that daring scout. I had before hand ordered my men to meet me at Cheatham's Ferry, and now that my plans had undergone such a sudden change, I sent two men up to tell them that I had gone to join Quantrell's command, and as many of them as wished could do likewise. They all come.

My meeting with this gallant cavalier was cordial in the extreme. Each of us, for the time forgetting his military dignity, saluted the other with the most fervent expression of esteem and admiration.

The next day we started out on that long-to-be-remembered "Quantrell's first raid into Kentucky," and every inch of our advance was contested by Federal guerillas worthy of their foes, and though they fought gallantly when they must and bushwhacked when they could, they were too badly outclassed in point of generalship to give us much anxiety.

After several days of almost incessant skirmishing with one band or another that infested those parts, we finally fought our way through, and, leaving the beaten road leading into Lexington, turned off into the mountains with a feeling of security and a longing for the rest that had been denied us for so long a time.

As we rode along, side by side, Quantrell and myself plotting, planning and scheming how we might harass the enemy on our exit from the mountains, Quantrell said with an air of considerable concern: "Captain, I don't believe we are yet out of the infested zone. Somehow or other we don't feel altogether secure, marching as we are, all in a bunch. We'd best divide our forces. You take ninety men and I'll take the others. I'll hold to one side of the valley and you the other. This will give us a better opportunity to use our forces in case of attack."

To this I readily assented (as I alway did), and we entered a gorge between two lofty ranges, and thus divided

pursued our way. We had not plunged very deep into this trough, when, all of a sudden, like a cloudburst from the craggy heights, a torrent of blue coats poured down upon us, Colonel Drake in command. When they entered the narrows through which we had just passed, they were forced to form by two, as we had done, and, taking advantage of the situation, we spread into the heights above and poured a deadly fire into their midst. Quantrell wheeled and opened fire in front, and for a full half hour the smoke of battle hid the contending foes from each other's view. But a generous breath of wind came sweeping down the gorse, blowing the smoke behind the scene of action, and no sooner were the mists cleared away than Colonel Drake spied me on an eminence high above them, and I distinctly heard him call out to his men: "Shoot the little imp on the ledge!" Instantly I fired on the gallant colonel, and had the satisfaction of seeing his cap fly into the air and right ear along with it. Supposing himself to be mortally wounded, he ordered a retreat, which soon became a stampede, and the field was ours.

It is remarkable to relate, and enough to make a guerilla ashamed of his trade to see what little damage we had done to each other. Out of the eight hundred big, healthy blue coat guerillas we had only bagged thirty-five and winged eighteen, while our loss in killed and wounded did not amount to as many as one.

We took their wounded to the brink of a clear running stream, where they could get their ever craved draught, and there left them to their fate till reinforcements should come along and pick them up. The slightly wounded could wait on their more unfortunate comrades, so they could make out fairly well, under the circumstances, until help came. We then decided to pursue the enemy and inflict as much damage on them as possible while they were in such a demoralized condition, and acting on this determination, we soon overtook them and had a running skirmish till merciful darkness called off the dogs of war and drove them again into their kennels.

What damage we did in this running skirmish, we were not able to ascertain, though from the signs along the road

it was very evident that our boys were fast learning the art of taking aim while at full tilt. We were as successful in this running fight as we had been in the pitched battle, for we lost not a man nor a horse.

If the intrepid Quantrell were pleased with the way I handled my men, as he expressed himself, what must have been my admiration for him when he not only directed his own movements, but mine as well.

In this first battle with Quantrell I readily discovered I had a master, from the fullness of whose military genius I was determined to absorb some knowledge of guerilla maneouvers and better fit myself for the inevitably long, long struggle.

Possibly Quantrell was not the man who could have turned the tide at Waterloo or Gettysburg, but there's no doubt that such a genius could have cut through the lines at Valaklava or ridden down the red minions of Sitting Bull on the plains of Little Big Horn. He was a thinker in the stress of battle, an actor in emergencies, and almost super-human when hope seemed gone and destruction inevitable. The idea of surrender never entered his head. To him a battle meant fight as long as there was anything to shoot at. Or if, perchance confronted by overwhelming odds, get out of the way for the time being in order to obtain a better prospect for success afterwards.

Having taken such arms and munitions as were scattered on the battlefield and along the way, we appropriated what suited us and destroyed the rest, and under cover of darkness pushed on to Russelville, where we hoped to scatter a garrison, but when we arrived in sight of the village lights we stopped and sent a few scouts on ahead to learn their position. The scouts soon returned with the information that there were only fifteen Yankees in the village, and this handful of blue coats had control of the whole outfit.

This infinitesimal number was beneath our commander's personal notice, so he deputed me, Captain Webster and five others to go in, take possession of the hotel, capture those fifteen soldiers and learn from them as much as possible concerning the disposition of Federal troops in the settlement. They surrendered to us without any opposition,

delivered up their guns, signed their paroles and went back to finish out a night of peaceful slumbers. We then went to the livery stable, where their horses were quartered, and, as we had no need of them, turned them out and drove them a long way ahead of us, then sent them hurrying off through the wilderness.

CHAPTER VII.

CROSSED THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER WITH QUANTRELL INTO MISSOURI.

If truth be stranger than fiction, as it is reported to be, it must needs be a queer thing; for, unless some ingenious quill pushers have followed their imaginations into the realms of fiction, I must needs be a very dead man, indeed. I have read of my sad and tragic death so many times that sometimes I was almost led to believe that the realities through which I was passing were but the dreamings of my spirit in Valhalla. I do not recollect ever having participated in a battle, a skirmish, or a raid that I was not most severely and effectually killed. I have seen the account of my death in the papers and talked with many a man who witnessed my murder. In those strenuous years following the close of the war, I have held friendly intercourse with several distinguished gentlemen who had killed me at different times and congratulated them on their phenomenal success. I know papers can't make mistakes, and men won't, just from sheer stubbornness. Therefore, all that has been written and said of Kit Dalton must be true. But the most deplorable death I ever experienced was at the hands of some Delilah who had lured me to my doom with her enchanting wiles. As nearly as I can recall the event, this little siren who so cruelly betrayed me to my doom was a bewitching little Yankee, who received her reward in a pension that the sturdy taxpayer is still supplying. But I never met the lady. Truly, I can't see how I have survived so many deaths with so little fatality. *Mirable tictu.*

I am sorry that the few more years allotted to me by the sacred statutes of limitations will not permit me to write of all the incidents that marked my career in Tennessee and Kentucky, but suffice it to say that each day brought its own adventure, and so commonplace they became that it is only now and then they recur to my memory. I have mentioned a few of them, not for their special importance, but merely as a prelude to the more stormy epochs of my life after I joined myself to Quantrell in his famous western exploits,

which, as you know, are a part of the history of our country.

We had not purposed leaving Kentucky and Tennessee so soon, but the Federals were so extremely cordial in their invitation to us to move on we could not ignore such courtesies and, accordingly, struck out for the land of the coyote.

Things were coming to the point where our presence in the old settlement was causing more harm to our people than we were inflicting on the enemy, for there was a band, a troupe, a company or a gang at every hamlet trying to set snares for our unwary feet, and, in the meantime, eating out the substance of our neighbors and friends. If we left and it was known that we were out of the country and in the far West, the tension might slacken and our people enjoy a happy vacation.

With these ideas in our mind, we struck out for the West. Our exodus was rather tame and uneventful and the way practically open to us—only now and then we ran into a band of prowling scavengers, which we disposed of to the very best possible advantages, leaving them no further desire to pillage and plunder in the name of the great United States of America.

We could have operated a few weeks in Eastern Tennessee with safety, but Quantrell had his plans all made for aggressive work in Missouri and towards this much harassed country we turned our horses' noses.

We came at last to the Mississippi river, opposite Point Pleasant, Mo., where we halted and made hasty preparations to cross over.

The water's edge was lined with skiffs, flats, batteaux and dugouts and into these we loaded all our plunder and put capable men into them to pull them across.

In all my experience I don't think I ever saw a more surprised individual than Jim Lunn when I told him he would have to paddle one of the boats.

Looking at me in utter amazement, he meekly said: "I'll tackle her, Cap; but you might as well say good bye to Jim Lunn, for I know I'm goin' wherever that thar tub takes a notion to carry me."

"Oh, it's easy enough, Jim, after you get the hang of it," I replied.

"Durn the hang of it," said Jim. " I don't want no hangin' in mine, but I reckon I can ride her about as fast as she can swim."

Through a spirit of mischief, I thought I would carry out my threat, and placed Jim in one of the boats and shoved him off before the others were ready to "tie loose," as Jim put it.

When the current caught the little craft Jim gave a few manly strokes like he might be fighting an alligator, and the boat began to wheel around, getting her nose up stream. A few more pulls and she was headed in the opposite direction and fast getting into the channel. I saw the sweat begin to pour out on poor Jim's distorted face and heard his labored groans as he tried to right his vessel and point her towards the opposite shore.

By this time Jim had drifted about one hundred yards down stream, a helpless derelict. Then I called to him to sit still till I could send him help. To which he replied: "I don't want no help, Cap; I'll take her across or send her to the bottom, and I knew Jim meant just what he said. Then I yelled out to him such instructions as he needed in the management of his boat, and, changing sides with his oar every few seconds, he got her pointed at an angle up stream and laboriously pulled at his paddle. It was plain now to me that the plucky fellow would win out unassisted, which, I assure you, was quite a feat, for Jim had never in all his life had a skiff paddle in his strong, horny hand.

Then all the boats made ready and the little flotilla shot out across the river in perfect order, and when they were half across, we eased our horses into the stream and half an hour later were safe on the opposite shore, having lost but one rider in the perilous journey. Jim was the first to welcome us across and was as proud of his adventure as a school boy over finding a hog eye marble.

After crossing the Mississippi we pushed on westward, crossed Nigger Wolf Bottom on the famous Pole road, and made our first stop at Grand Prairie, in Arkansas. Then, after a short rest, resumed our march and crossed the St. Francis river at Chalk Bluff, in Green county, and from thence went to Gainesville, where we pitched camp and took a wholesome rest, preparatory to joining Shelby or

Smith in their expeditions against the enemy, who were then as thick in Arkansas as fiddlers in purgatory.

We were not in Arkansas many days when General Sterling Price came into our vicinity on one of his terrible raids. We quickly attached ourselves to his command and with him fought the memorable battle of Pea Ridge.

Knowing the importance of the engagement, Quantrell enlisted under his banner and in the fierce engagement won enough laurels to crown him a conqueror for all time.

I will not enter into details concerning this memorable battle, for it has been elaborated on by historians on both sides, and if you want the unvarnished truth, add the sum totals from the pens of both sides and divide the result by two and you will have a pretty true account of one of the most memorable battles in the history of the "war in the west."

It must be borne in mind that I am not attempting to write a general history of the stirring times in those days, but a simple resume of the part I played individually in the most soul stirring epoch of American history. What the great leaders did is a part of the history of our country and occupies its rightful place in the archives of the nation.

"When the battle was pitched over towards the ridge," Quantrell lead his forces through the shell swept valley and gradually pushed on towards the front, where the Federals in solid phalanx were sweeping all before them. On all sides round our comrades were falling, while from the apex of the Ridge the gallant boys in blue continued to pour into our midst a storm of lead and sent screaming shells tearing through our wavering lines.

It was evident to Quantrell that the death dealing battery must be captured or the day was lost. Calling Captain Anderson to his side, he said: "Captain Anderson, we must have that battery. It is our only salvation, and we must have it quick." To which the gallant Anderson replied: "Give me twenty men and it is ours." In less than five minutes there were a hundred volunteers, but choosing only his own comrades from Quantrell's command, he declined the services of all others and with that little handful of dare-devils made a mad dash across the intervening space and sped like the wind up the slope.

The Federals quickly realized the desperate game we were about to play and when we were within fifty yards of the guns I distinctly heard the command to lower the guns. Instantly the muzzles dropped and the next second the grass in front of them was a mass of flames. To retreat now was absolute suicide and to advance further seemed equally fatal, for if we survived the guns there was yet a possibility of being roasted in the burning grass, but we did not stop to calculate. It was a time for action and not speculation. The guns were posted about forty feet apart and through the lanes between them we pressed on to the breech of the guns, where a short, furious and decisive battle raged till every gunner lay dead beside his gun and the enemy in confusion fell back. It was a glorious turn of affairs and gave us the first inning, but what the others would bring forth, no man could tell.

With the guns now in our possession and the enemy in confusion it looked like the victory was ours, and there's no doubt it would have been had we only had a Joshua to hold the sun back only half an hour longer. As it was, darkness began to creep up the slope and in the midst of the rattle of musketry, the crashing of shells, the wails of the wounded and the groans of the dying, pulled her sable curtains over the terrible scene with fingers bloody red.

In this engagement our Indian allies proved of little service, as they always do in pitched battles. Aside from their savage yells, their grotesque appearance and their absurd antics, there's little left to the Noble Red Man where true bravery is required and cool nerve needed. How in the name of common sense the Indian has ever been idealized as the spirit of bravery and the soul of honor is a question that passes my comprehension. They may have been noble men in the days of "The Leather Stocking Tales," but their valor must have perished when Fenimore Cooper died.

When night had shut down on the terrible scene the Confederates fell back and awaited for the dawn of another day to show them how to sacrifice their men with the hopes of gaining an empty victory on the following morning.

About midnight runners came to General Price with the unpleasant information that General Smith was hurrying

to the aid of the Federals with ten thousand men and was expected about daylight.

Price already had his hands full. He could not hope to hold out against such unequalled numbers a single hour. A pitched battle would have meant annihilation, for five thousand men cannot hope to hold their own against twenty-five thousand sundowners armed with nothing but their whiskey soaked breath and the vile epithets common to these knights of the road.

There was but one thing to be done, and that must be done quickly. When day broke that morning, Quantrell, by orders of his commandant, opened up on the enemy from the opposite side of the Ridge, and while this little ruse was going on, the main body of Price's army made their escape.

In a little while we, too, were on the march, with the enemy following close behind, nipping our heels at every step.

For the entire day they followed and wasted more ammunition in a vain endeavor to hurt us than we had expended in the entire engagement.

History has given Colonel Shelby credit for holding Van Dorn in check on that memorable morning, and while I am free to admit he lent some assistance, it was Quantrell's strategy that extricated the Confederate forces from a terrible predicament. I was with Quantrell and under this able general defended Price's rear during the entire day, and was still on duty when the Federals abandoned the chase at Fayetteville and returned to their bivouac.

It was a fierce battle and though the enemy's losses were considerably in excess of our own, the victory was theirs, for we were forced to leave the field in their possession, where they were permitted to bury their dead and care for their wounded.

In this engagement some of our most gallant officers fell, and altogether, in all it was a very poor day's business for either side.

After the enemy had left us to go our way, we fell back on Van Buren, Ark., where we parted company with General Price, his objective point being Pine Bluff, while ours was the Indian Nation—now the great state of Oklahoma.

CHAPTER VIII.

FIERCE FIGHT AT FLANNERY'S HOUSE.

Finding nothing of importance to engage our attention in the Nation, we pushed on northward into Missouri, the most sorely beset state in the Union; for here the Federals were posted in every hamlet and they seemed to have but one end and aim in view—which was to exterminate decent men and turn the great state over to such scullions as Jennison and Jim Lane—to whom we will pay our tributes of respect later on. Jackson, Cass and Clay counties at this time were hot beds of Federal nondescripts, regulars, jayhawkers, marauders, pillagers, plunderers, Kansas Red Legs and every description of vermin that were ever spawned in the infernal regions, and the joy of their existence was murder, rapine, loot and arson.

To this band of prowling scavengers it mattered little who was the victim. It might have been old men with strong Union sentiments, but when it suited the purpose of these minions of the devil, the inoffensive non-combatants were quickly adjudged "Southern sympathizers" and their effects confiscated to fill the commissariat of these bloody vampires. This section of the state was the recruiting grounds of both factions, for where a country is divided, bitterness prevails and neighbor is anxious to contend against neighbor as much for the purpose of redressing private wrongs as for more commendable purposes.

Missouri was the home of some of the most famous free-booters the world has ever known, and it was also the home of some of the most notorious Federal whelps that ever disgraced the pages of history with their deeds of infamy.

It seems to have been the idea of the government that if it could effectually dispose of Quantrell, the James brothers, the Youngers and Kitty Poole the war in the west would soon end and the numberless garrisons throughout that section could be called in to operate in other fields, and they were particularly anxious to make way with these gentlemen as soon as possible.

Quantrell was fully alive to his perilous situation and guarded his movements with as much caution as daring,

and it may be stated in all fairness that his tactics have never been equalled in offensive and defensive operations.

I had just rejoined my chieftain, after parting company with him in the Nation, and was in his command only a few days when the activity of the enemy broke loose with renewed vigor and relentless fury.

We had been annoying the enemy considerably of late, while operating in small squads in different parts of the state, which gave them the impression that Quantrell was everywhere, and as we always did our work and got out of the way without any harm done to us, they were exceedingly sore and more determined than ever to get us out of the way, but January the 3d, 1862, was one of our luckless dates, for on this memorable day we had gone to the home of a Mr. Flannery, where our then small force secured accommodations for the night. After a few days of exceeding activity, it can be well imagined that we were pretty much fagged out and in no humor to be disturbed by the never tiring enemy. But it seems that they had very little regard for our comfort or wishes and sought to disturb us as much as we were worrying them.

By some means unknown to us the Federals had located us in this happy retreat and a Captain Peabody with a full company was sent out to surround us and take us captive, or leave us all dead on the threshold of our very hospitable host.

Picket duty on this occasion fell to the lot of Bill Albright and myself. I was posted to the east and Albright to the west of the house, and had not tramped my beat more than an hour when I heard the patter of horses' feet far down the road. They were coming from my end of the watch and when they came charging up to within fifty yards of me, I challenged the foremost rider, whose only reply was the crack of a pistol, followed by another and yet another. I quickly returned his fire and had the satisfaction to hear some ponderous weight come lumbering to the ground, but his place was soon filled and the next second I was in the midst of a downpour of lead which made anything but sweet music in my quickened ears. I emptied my pistol in their onrushing faces, and I know beyond a doubt that the number of their casualties just equalled the number of re-

ports from my trusty gun, but I did not wait to reload. That is not a sentry's duty. Rushing to the house with all speed, I was delighted to see my comrades already dressed and the door standing ready to receive me. More fortunate or unfortunate than myself, Albright was cut off from the house, but he did effective work from his hiding place till driven off into the woods.

When the Federals had the house completely invested, they called out to Quantrell to surrender, as there was no possible way for him to escape. Quantrell asked for five minutes to discuss the matter with the boys, and when the time was up called out to the enemy that he hadn't a man in his command who cared to accede to his demands. Then the ball opened. A volley came crashing through the walls, answered by the boys on the inside, who saw nothing but death staring them in the face. At the first fire from our guns, Peabody's lieutenant fell dead on the doorsteps, and many in the yard went down at the same time.

In the first lull, Quantrell called out to Peabody for protection to the Flannerys, which was readily given and the untterrified Flannerys reluctantly abandoned their home for the shelter the enemy offered.

At this juncture one of our own men took it into his head that he would rather be on the outside looking in than the inside looking out, and so deserted to the enemy and a few minutes later was lined up with his late antagonists, pouring a furious fire into the walls that sheltered those whose protection he had enjoyed and outraging the hospitality of the man who had given him a haven of rest.

For a full half hour the battle raged with all the mad determination of demons, and seeing the utter impossibility of dislodging us, the enemy applied the torch in the ell—a place they could reach in safety, as this part of the building was beyond the pale of our protection, as there were no windows, doors or other openings through which we could fire on the fire bugs.

In a little while the flames began to crackle beneath the corner of the ell, and it was plain enough to us that our sojourn was limited to a few short minutes.

The fire kept up a slow, yet steady, advance, while we were showering death into the enemy in merciless abun-

dance, and seeing how long they would be exposed to our terrible guns, a body of determined men ran to the lot, where they found a load of hay, which they quickly wheeled up against the burning walls, and in a few minutes the smoke and flames began to pour in at every crack, and made our situation terrible in the extreme. One of my companions at my side sank down completely suffocated, and this would have been my fate, but for a crack in the opposite wall which caught my eye, and to this crack I hurried and, placing my mouth against it, sucked in a few drafts of the sweet and delicious outside air.

How long were we doomed to stay within those walls? When would our chieftain give the order to make a break for liberty or a more merciful death?

As self-preservation is the first law of nature, I had made up my mind to make a dash for the outside, but before doing so I hunted up my chieftain to see what was the matter with him that he had not given orders to evacuate the building, and to my horror, found him so choked with the terrible fumes that he was unable to give the order to make a break for the doors. It was no time for discipline, no place to speculate on the consequences of insubordination. I shouted the commands that he was unable to utter, a shout went up from our glad boys, and the next instant the doors were opened and the desperate fellows dashed through, pouring a destructive fire into the ranks of the enemy, and soon it was a hand-to-hand conflict. But our determination gave us the advantage and soon we had swept the field before us and were in wild flight, making to a covert about two hundred yards in front of the building.

In this engagement we lost only ten men, two of whom had perished in the building and one deserted to the enemy.

The enemy's loss was between forty and fifty. Just why their casualties were so small, when for the first half hour we had such an advantage over them, I cannot figure out. We should have killed four times the number, for we had twenty good shots and they were all resolute, determined men.

CHAPTER IX.

FIGHT AT TATE'S HOUSE.

Having gained the sheltering woods, we pursued our way undisturbed, for I can easily imagine how the enemy's time was taken up for many hours following the little fight. The wounded needed attention and the dead needed a resting place far removed from the bitter strife.

A few hours out, Albright rejoined us, and for full three weeks we devoted our attention to the capture of convoys bringing munitions and supplies to the enemy.

Nothing of special interest occurred after the Flannery battle till about one month later, when this fight was almost duplicated in the battle of Tate's House.

Major Tate was heartily in sympathy with the South and was ever ready to lend a helping hand when he could do so without imperilling the lives of his family. It was a bitter cold evening when Quantrell, with twenty of his men, rode up to this hospitable home and asked for lodging. Todd, with the rest of the company, found lodging further on. I can never forget the cordial reception we received from the major, for it was hearty and sincere and characterized by that hospitality which so distinguished Southern gentlemen of birth and distinction. The home was quickly thrown into a reception hall. The great log fire roared up broad chimneys, while the bitter winds on the bleak outside whistled their melancholy songs to make us the more keenly appreciate the cheer and comfort of the sheltering walls.

When the merry tinkle of the supper bell sounded from some remote part of the building a happy band of famished guerrillas sprang to the front as readily as they sprang to arms at the sudden and unexpected appearance of the enemy, and I want to here observe, if we ever wrought such sad destruction to the enemy as we did to that bountiful spread, the war wouldn't have lasted half so long. The slack was taken out of limp systems that hadn't known the peculiar sensations of a tight belt for many days.

Fortunately, as the fox hunter would say, I was in at the killing and did full honors to the host, while two of my more unfortunate comrades were shivering with the cold, looking for an enemy they were in no wise anxious to find. But

their good time came later, while I, with another, stood picket to the east and west of the house.

The night was bitter cold, and as I walked my beat the icy gusts swept down on me with merciless fury, making me quicken my gait and draw my head down deeper in my heavy coat. I had walked back and forth till I had a regular path beaten in the snow. It was 11 o'clock and my comrades in the cozy inside were sleeping the sleep of sweet oblivion and most likely dreaming of the great feast they had just enjoyed. In another hour I would be relieved, for we changed shifts at 12 o'clock. As I tramped my frozen beat with unceasing tread, my ears were quickened by a distant sound as of midnight riders. I stopped and listened, but the sounds died away, and all was stillness again, save for the melancholy shriek of the piercing winds. Twelve o'clock was near at hand, and in a few minutes I would be relieved and some happy slumberer would exchange his comfortable bed for the icy air of night. I was walking my last beat and was at the gate when a solitary horseman dashed out of the skirt of woods in front of the house. "Who comes?" I demanded. A bullet whistled by my head and I heard it hit the plank wall of the house. I returned the fire and instantly the stillness of the night was torn to shreds by the rattle of musketry. I didn't wait for the second volley, but hastened to the house. The door was thrown open to admit the other guard and myself and quickly barricaded. The Federals knew only too well the determination which characterized the guerillas' fighting, and, though knowing it, were still brave enough to attack our stronghold. As soon as we were within walls the battle opened in good earnest. Quantrell, Cole Younger, George Shepherd, Albright, as fierce fighters as ever crooked finger around a delicate crescent of steel, were stationed at the most advantageous places and poured a deadly fire into the enemy's ranks. They hesitated for a moment—a moment only—then the bombardment was renewed in deadly earnest.

There is no question of guerrilla bravery. It has been tested and proven too often to admit of debate. Many cheap books have been written extolling guerrilla bravery and deprecating the courage of their enemy. Our men were courageous to the point of recklessness, but I am not sure

that it takes more courage to defend one's life than it does to risk one's life in an endeavor to capture the enemy in his stronghold. In many instances we found the enemy possessed of entirely too much courage for our comfort, and many a poor fellow has been sent headlong into eternity—driven to his doom by his patriotic endeavors in behalf of the cause he espoused. We had no advantage of the enemy in this respect, for they were certainly as fearless as it was possible for men to be.

On this occasion, as at Flannery's, the Federals had completely surrounded the house, and being two hundred strong, had every reason to believe our escape was a matter of physical impossibility.

After a few volleys the Federals called out, demanding our surrender. A scornful laugh from Quantrell was the guerrilla reply, and the battle opened.

In about ten minutes four of our guerrillas signified their willingness to abandon the hopeless resistance, and asked Quantrell's permission to surrender. "Yes, by all means," said Quantrell; "we don't want men in our ranks that harbor such sentiments, under any circumstances. Go on to the enemy and thereby admit your unfitness for warfare." Thereupon Quantrell called out to the attacking captain and told him he had four men who wanted to surrender, and that he desired protection for the family as well. "Send them out," came the reply. "We will take good care of them."

Major Tate reluctantly yielded to Quantrell's demands for him to get out with his family to a safe place. The firing ceased, and the major, defiant to the last, escorted his courageous family to the barn, where they calmly waited developments in the bloody drama.

I don't know what became of the four who so cowardly surrendered. It is reasonable to suppose they were paroled and sent home, for the Federals had no cause to fear much from such weak kneed men.

When Major Tate and his family, and the four chicken hearted pseudo guerrillas were disposed of, the fight recommenced, and for an hour the battle raged with fury, and the grim reaper was busy with his terrible scythe.

The white pall that enshrouded the earth soon became as crimson as the cardinal's robe and dead men were piled across each other on their gory beds of snow.

Again, through the fierce firing, we heard the old, familiar demand for our surrender, which seemed to be one of their tricks when they were sorely beset, and to the demand Quantrell gave a derisive laugh and told the commanding officer he was just getting in good fighting shape.

"Your situation is hopeless," came back from the commander. "It is a useless sacrifice of life to hold out any longer. Surrender and we will treat you as prisoners of war."

"The same old gag," answered Quantrell. "Go on with the dance, let joy be unconfined."

The order was obeyed, and soon our walls were rattling with the bullets of the enemy and our guns were working with telling effect on their diminishing ranks.

An hour longer the battle raged and hundreds of dollars worth of good ammunition were expended against the unfeeling walls.

At last the attacking forces realized the hopelessness of dislodging us with rifles, resorted to the same old tactics—the torch—and I say, to their credit, I do not believe they wanted to burn us out if they could possibly capture us otherwise, else they would have applied the torch sooner.

This house, like Flannery's, was built with that old death trap of an ell that could not be defended from the inside, and to this ell the Federals hastened in great numbers, applied the torch and fell back to await the time when we must inevitably make a dash through their ranks.

The smoke soon began to ooze through the cracks and in the shattered windows, and Quantrell profited by his last experience and ordered the boys to load every gun and then follow him—stating that any who desired to surrender might do so at once, to which twenty voices answered in chorus: "We'll surrender when you do, not till then."

"Then, are you ready?"

"Ready," came back the cheerful reply.

"All out," shouted Quantrell at the top of his voice, and with this he threw the door open and jumped out, followed instantly by his entire command.

The desperate straits into which our boys had been thrown seemed to give unusual nerve to them and, having tasted of such a cup before, were cooler and more self-possessed. When they hit the ground they dashed onto the enemy and every shot seemed to take effect. The lines were opened before us and in a little while we were in the sheltering woods.

I believe this was the most peculiar battle I was ever in, from one viewpoint. I think the figures conservative when I put them at five thousand shots having been fired at us without the slightest injury to our men, for in all the engagement we lost not a man, either killed or wounded.

How, in the name of reason so many bullets could have gone wild is more than I can understand. True, the great majority were battered flat against the brick walls of our fortifications, but there was enough space through the windows to admit of a bushel of bullets and there was positively no excuse for us to get through their lines unscratched. The Federal loss in killed and wounded was about sixty, most of whom were killed outright, thereby cheating the pension rolls of another contingent of free pie chasers.

The brave lieutenant of the Federals was the first to fall before our guns.

After we had gotten in the woods we were safe once more and continued our never-ending pilgrimage of destruction.

CHAPTER X.

BLUE CUT, THE VALLEY OF DEATH.

After the fight at Major Tate's house, Quantrell decided to make his defensive operations a secondary consideration and give his attention to offensive tactics. He well knew that every highway was guarded and that no less than twenty-five thousand men were ever on his trail with the determination to wipe out his little band, which alternately numbered from twenty to seventy-five men. The Missouri militia co-operated with the Federal forces of Kansas and their whole attention was given to the pursuit of the unconquerable Quantrell. It seemed a foolhardy undertaking for Quantrell to pursue offensive tactics, and none but a master mind could have conceived such an idea in the circumstance. To me it would have been just as advisable for a wolf to start out on the trail of a pack of hounds with the full knowledge that a hungry pack could be found at every crossroads. But as indecipherable to me as it was, and is, it was evidently the strength of the game.

Quantrell was seldom in ignorance of the enemy's movements, and whenever it was apparent to him that he could fall on them under advantageous circumstances, he never failed to take advantage of the opportunity.

It came to him one morning that the Federals were in his neighborhood, en route to the home of a Mr. Blythe, where they had reason to believe Cole Younger was in hiding. To this home an entire company went with the intention of capturing the daring scout, and being unable to land him, they demanded of Mrs. Blythe and her little son the secret of Cole's whereabouts. Mrs. Blythe knew nothing, but it was apparent that the boy was not possessed of such blissful ignorance, whereupon the Federals set to work to extort from the lad any knowledge he possessed concerning the hiding place of Younger. The lad stubbornly declined to tell anything, even when subjected to the most barbarous torture. When the first opportunity offered, young Blythe made a dash and got away from his captors; returning almost instantly with a pistol in his little hand, he discharged it right into the open countenance of the most cruel of his persecutors, killing him instantly and

seriously wounding another. Whereupon the whole company arose in its righteous wrath and sent sixteen bullets through his young body. When the news of this tragedy reached Quantrell he was beside himself with a craving for revenge, swift and fearful.

After the commission of this most atrocious deed, the Federals started back on the main highway that led through Blue Cut—a deep ravine-like road, with precipitate walls, twenty feet high, studded with giants trees, massive rocks, and festooned with an undergrowth of shrubs. Instantly Quantrell rushed his little band out and took possession of this natural death trap. His men were concealed behind rocks, boulders and trees, where they were practically immune to danger, for fifty men thus protected could have held an army of a thousand at bay and killed them all if they had remained to answer the challenge.

At Quantrell's command I had gone up the cut to intercept their flight, taking three men with me. We were hardly stationed in our places when we heard the battle open. I say a battle, but it cannot be called a battle when the fighting is all on one side. So furious and unexpected was the attack the Federals could only shoot into the air and yell like savages. Into their midst Quantrell and his men poured a deadly stream of death, and horses and men mingled their blood in this terrible valley of death. From the very first the Federals thought of nothing but saving themselves, and even if they had shown fight it would have availed them little, for a stand would have meant their complete destruction.

It was not long before they were rushing madly through the gap in a mad endeavor to escape, and when they were within fifty yards of us, my three men and I rushed down on them, shouting like savages and discharging our guns into the advancing stampede. They were evidently too demoralized to ascertain the number that opposed their flight and the most terrible confusion ensued. Many wheeled and tried to make their way back through the slaughter in the rear, but one bold fellow, seeing his opportunity, dashed forward on his magnificent war horse, and as I was wildly riding in his direction on a more powerful animal, my soon-to-be antagonist realized the precariousness of his situation,

and with the fury of a demon dashed towards me, with the intention of ramming his pistol into my face before pulling the trigger, but his plans went for naught, for at the critical moment I reined my horse into his, and both going at full tilt, were thrown back on their haunches. His horse rolled completely over from the impact. Instantly we were both on our feet with our terrible guns almost in each others faces. His first shot whizzed between my ear and head, scorching both. His second relieved me of my cap, while my bullets seemed to go harmlessly whizzing away through space. At my third shot I saw him stagger and pitch headlong to the ground, but I feel reasonably sure that it was not my shot that killed him, as his lurch forward would seem to confirm the belief that he had received his death wound at the hands of his own men, who were trying to kill me.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Federal captain in this engagement completely lost his wits, else he would have surrendered, for we were not then fighting under the black flag, and not a day passed that we did not capture some of the enemy and parole them. Be this as it may, not a word concerning surrender was asked or proffered. It was simply a slaughter of the most terrible type.

How many lived through this fierce engagement I do not know, but it is safe to state that not one man out of ten escaped.

When the battle was over and the wind had swept the stifling fumes of powder out of the cut, the scene that met our eyes, instead of satisfying, was simply appalling. There they lay in piles, the dead and the dying, and the piteous pleas for help and water would have moved a heart of stone.

For a long time we were busy with the wounded, giving such aid as was in our power, but Quantrell, knowing the nearness of other companies, realized the danger of remaining longer to administer to the sufferers, for if we had we would undoubtedly have needed the same attention we were giving them.

In this engagement I do not remember that we lost a man, but we certainly killed a lot of magnificent horses we would have liked to possess.

After the slaughter we scouted through the country, cap-

turing the enemy's convoys and replenishing our diminishing supply of food and munitions, and, as a matter of course, destroying what we could not use.

Three weeks following the slaughter in Blue Cut we went into camp on Indian creek, in Jackson county, about twelve miles from Independence, Mo., for the purpose of recruiting our force and watching the movements of the enemy. It was our custom to disband every few days, small squads going in different directions and capturing whatever came in our way, and whenever half a dozen men held up a wagon train, took possession of the things we wanted, destroyed the rest and paroled our prisoners, it was the custom of the paroled men to give out the information that they were captured by an overwhelming force, which gave the Federals a wrong impression of our numbers, greatly to our advantage, for it inspired fear in the hearts of the enemy.

We had not been long encamped on the Indian river when the Federals learned by spies of our whereabouts, and Colonel Buell at the head of two hundred men sallied out from Independence to effect our capture. He had gotten straight information concerning our numbers and felt confident of capturing us.

In anticipation of such trouble we had hurriedly felled a vast number of trees, cutting them all so the tops would fall back from our camp and thereby afford better protection against a cavalry charge, and it is well we did so, for our fortifications were not more than completed, when, on the morning of the 26th of February, 1862, we were startled by the roar of a distant gun and the next minute a shell whistled harmlessly over our heads, cutting its way through the smaller limbs till it found a resting place at last in a mighty oak, not a hundred feet beyond our fortifications, where it burst with a mighty boom, shattering the tree to splinters. Instantly our pickets were driven in and for one time Quantrell realized that he had suffered himself to be surrounded in the open field. The situation was extremely critical and Quantrell communicated his anxiety to me, Shepherd and Younger, and after a lengthy consultation our plans for escape were agreed upon.

All day the battle raged and heavy shells were contin-

ually bursting harmlessly above us. Realizing our condition, we only fired where we had hope of doing damage, and in this we succeeded admirably, for the enemy's loss was considerable, while ours amounted to almost nothing, so effectual were our fortifications.

When night came on the battle was still in progress, but darkness settled down, making further attempts to take our position useless.

We knew full well what the morrow would bring forth. We could not hold out another day, even if we should succeed in killing twenty to one, for reinforcements would undoubtedly come in during the night, and our ammunition was playing out at an alarming rate.

There was but one course left to us, and that was strategy, and the plans that effected our escape are due solely to Cole Younger, for it was his resourceful brain that saved us from complete annihilation.

When darkness had settled over the land and the roar of cannon had ceased to reverberate through the trembling trees, we put our plans into operation. For several hours the axe rang merrily in the forest, answered now and then by the crash of a mighty tree, which told the enemy we were at work, strengthening our fortifications, and while this decoy was going on, Cole Younger, Bill Anderson, Tom Maddox and I slipped quietly through a gap in the enemy's line and made our way to a nearby farmhouse, where a lot of cattle were corralled for the night. Quietly removing a panel from the fence, we jumped in among the astonished cattle, and with shots and yells, soon had them completely stampeded. There was but one course they could take, and that was in the direction of the enemy, and with wild bleating and piteous yells they tore their frightened way through the timber, and the Federals, thinking they were being charged by reinforcements to our forces, turned their entire attention to the advancing enemy, sending volley after volley into their terrified "ranks;" and while thus engaged with a will-o'-the-wisp enemy, we took advantage of the opportunity and made our escape.

When morning broke, instead of being in front of the enemy, we were in their rear. Quantrell knew the position of their guns and felt sure of their capture, for they could

do us a double service—one, to use against the enemy, the other, for our own protection against their destructive fire.

When the first gray streaks of dawn began to sift through the overhanging trees, Quantrell gave the order to charge, and in less than five minutes the battery was ours.

At this instance a large force of cavalry was seen in the distance, and the two contending armies made ready for their reception in a very inhospitable manner. It was Jennison's force coming to the aid of Buell, but the latter mistaking him for Colonel Upton Hays of the Confederates, opened fire on the astonished disciple of John Brown, and for a while the greatest confusion prevailed.

Quantrell quickly took advantage of Jennison's mistake, dashed in among the demoralized enemy and turned loose the captured guns on their late masters.

Seeing his infantry fairly cut to pieces, Jennison concluded the opposing forces were too much for him to handle, whereupon he wheeled and beat a cowardly retreat. But he was not permitted to get away with the little damage done to him by his own comrades, for Quantrell turned from the pursuit of Buell's panic stricken men and directed his attention to the much perplexed Jennison. His cavalry never having been under fire before, was thrown into the wildest disorder by our exploding shells, which resulted in a complete stampede, wherein the slaughter was something fierce.

In this engagement the enemy lost over a hundred killed, while our loss was only eight. We captured Jennison's ammunition train, appropriated two thousand rounds of ammunition, spiked their guns and had them rolled into the Big Blue.

Thus ended one of the fiercest battles in "The War of the West," and a glorious victory was snatched from the sepulchre of almost abandoned hopes.

CHAPTER XI.

SECOND BATTLE OF BLUE CUT—FIGHT AT WALNUT CREEK.

There's no occasion for going into details regarding the second battle of Blue Cut, for histories abound with graphic accounts of these fierce battles, and this one was but a replica of that other engagement, which was more of a slaughter pen than a battlefield.

Edward's History of Shelby and His Men and Buel's Story of the Young Brothers give full and almost accurate accounts of these battles. However, Edwards' history is a little too general and Buel's rather too specific. At any rate they did fairly well for men who were not in the actual fighting and deserve credit for the near accuracy of their accounts.

Anyway, a passing word relative to this second battle of Blue Cut will not be malapropos, and I give herewith the main features of this engagement as nearly as I can recall them to memory after so many years. If these records murder one or two more people than actually fell in these battles it will not affect posterity, and if they wound more than were damaged in the fighting they will not affect the pension roll. It is my endeavor to give the actual facts, and I will do so as nearly as they recur to my memory, which, I must admit, is in fairly good working order.

In this second battle of Blue Cut I think Cole Younger was in command, Quantrell being absent on important business.

We were in the vicinity of Blue Cut when we received information through our scouts that a small company of Federals were scouring the country in search of us, but just now a small company hoped to accomplish what a large command could not do, is a question for them to settle.

The route of the searchers led straight into the Blue Cut. We were posted as before and when they were centerways in this death trap we opened fire on them, which resulted in another slaughter.

On this occasion, however, the Federals were commanded by a most gallant and brave gentleman by the name of Cap-

tain Long, who, though a true Federal, was a personal friend of Cole Younger.

For a short while Captain Long held his ground most stubbornly, but finding how ineffectual his bullets were on the granite boulders and giant trees, behind which we were firing, and seeing further that his advance was blocked and his retreat cut off, he gallantly surrendered, but not until half his command lay dead in the terrible shambles.

The meeting of captor and captive was quite friendly, and after a short parley, Captain Long signed his parole and the little remnant of his command busied themselves for the next few hours collecting their dead and caring for the wounded. We took their arms and destroyed them to make sure the parole would last for the remainder of the day, any way.

In this sharp, but brief, engagement, the Federals lost twenty-five killed and wounded, while our loss was three killed and five wounded—all our wounded recovering in a short time and reporting for service as soon as they could mount a horse.

Quantrell returned to his command the next day with a fresh enlistment, which now gave him a most formidable band of fighters, numbering seventy-five, which included the redoubtable Jack Rider and his small band, who had been operating in a small way against the enemy on their own account. A few days later Quantrell pitched his camp on the banks of Walnut Creek and immediately set about fortifying his position by felling trees in the same manner which we had done on previous occasions, which proved so effectual against a cavalry charge, and while some of the men were thus occupied others were foraging for provisions.

Cole Younger and I were together in the country not far from headquarters, having with us ten other men at the home of a Mr. Larkin, with whom we were making a deal, when, to our surprise, fifteen Federals were seen galloping down the road in our direction. At this time we had twelve men in our band, all good shots and possessed of the proper courage. To make an attempt to escape from such a small body of men was something that never entered our heads. We had overcome vast odds on many an occasion, and there was no reason to anticipate trouble from

equal numbers, for they were only three men more than ourselves.

Before the advancing cavalry could get a glimpse of us we went into hiding behind a lot of old bed quilts that had been washed and were then hanging on a clothes line to dry, our horses having been hitched behind the house. All unsuspecting our presence, this little detachment galloped up to the gate and asked Mr. Larkin if he was not harboring blankety blank rebels. Before this worthy gentleman could reply we were out from our hiding places, pouring a stream of death into their midst. The little scrap was ended in less than two minutes, and fourteen gallant young Federal soldiers lay lifeless before the gate—only one making his escape.

It developed later that the fifteen men were the advance guard of quite a considerable army. Anticipating this Cole gave orders to horse and we galloped away with lightning speed to get inside our breastworks before the enemy could overtake us. In this we were successful, but scarcely had Quantrell closed up our entrance than the enemy were upon us. On they came like an avalanche, four hundred strong and all eager for an engagement, for they had been seeking one with us since the last slaughter in the Blue Cut. But for that matter, it was their trade, and the occupation that gave them meat and drink.

As they charged upon our fortifications we poured a deadly fire into them that fairly dazed them for a moment, but plucky fellows that they were, they refused to remain dazed. The much astonished and perplexed cavalry retreated some two hundred yards to a hill, where they formed a line of battle in anticipation of a fierce engagement with equal numbers. For two hours they deliberated on what manner of attack might be most effectual, and all this time we were busily engaged strengthening our fortifications. In the afternoon the Federal army was reinforced by two hundred men, and thus strengthened, made another fierce attack on our fortifications, only to be repulsed with a heavier loss than in the first.

A force of about one hundred men deployed down the creek and another of two hundred was sent to attack us in the rear—little suspecting the guerrilla never possessed a

rear while entrenched as we were. A combined attack was agreed upon, and at the given word a fierce rattle of musketry opened up on three sides of us. The main body being weakened by the three hundred men sent to attack our flank and rear, suffered a terrible loss from our guerrillas, who always watched for the most vulnerable spot in the enemy's lines. Seeing the suffering of their comrades in front, the flanking squad, as well as those in the rear, hastened to their aid, and a combined attack was made with disastrous results to their ranks.

It became apparent to the enemy that it would be useless to storm our fortifications mounted, whereupon they fell back and hitched their horses in a gulch, five or six hundred yards from the site of hostilities, then forming in infantry columns and with solid phalanx ascended the hill, reserving their fire for more effectual work than they could hope for at such a distance, and came marching on in perfect order. Our men had been ordered to hold their fire till the enemy was right upon them, then turn loose a volley upon them, aiming at the belts that surrounded their well fed systems. With breathless expectancy we lay low behind our barricades till the foremost began to scramble up the breastworks, then turned our deadly dogs of war loose and bade them feast to their hunger's fill. The line wavered under that murderous fire and fell back, but the rents were repaired by another command in reserve, and again they charged our works, only to be mown down in merciless slaughter. We kept on pouring a deadly stream of death into their ranks, till reason asserted the throne of bravery, and the enemy fell back to think it over. This gave courage an opportunity to reclaim its dominion over judgment, and once again the charge was sounded. Again they were repulsed with heavy loss, and again and again they charged with ever the same results. In the middle of the fight Quantrell received a painful wound through his leg, but unmindful of the consequences, he was everywhere, encouraging his men by his brave demeanor, and dealing out death to the enemy at every chance.

Hour after hour the battle raged with almost incessant fury, till merciful darkness pulled her sable mantle over the bloody scene. Under the protecting shades of night two

bold scouts crept out from behind our breastworks for the purpose of spying out the best avenue of escape, for we knew only too well what the morrow would bring forth if we remained there to battle with an enemy who could put two fresh soldiers in the place of every dead one. In addition to this, our own men were in a bad way and ammunition was almost exhausted. To get out was our only hope, and about 12 o'clock the scouts returned with the information we so much desired.

We lost no time getting ready to decamp, and in less than an hour after the return of the spies we had raised camp, and mounting double in many instances, carried our wounded through the lines and deposited them among friends in the surrounding country.

The next morning found us safe from the enemy in the hills of the Sny.

CHAPTER XII. BATTLE OF INDEPENDENCE.

The idea seems to obtain in many sections that Quantrell, the Youngers, the James boys and Kit Dalton were a gang of outlaws whose sole object in life was to prey indiscriminately on such corporations as were best prepared to furnish booty worthy of our enterprises and to kill all who opposed our undertakings.

Nothing could be more ridiculous. Quantrell was never an outlaw, but a soldier whose genius and energy in behalf of the Southern people made the world ring with his daring exploits. He fought under the black flag for a while, but not then till he had been driven to these desperate measures by a public proclamation issued by Major Blunt to the effect that all persons caught bearing arms against the United States of America would be summarily executed. This order is responsible for the birth of the black flag, and though many weird tales have been told concerning this sable pennant, they are all fabrications, for after we had raised the black flag we paroled our captives just the same, and in this we were put at a great disadvantage, for whenever any of our men were captured they were executed as traitors. The object of the black flag in our ranks was more to intimidate the enemy than anything else, as it never carried out its threats, but it did let the enemy know we were not using war as a pastime and that when we met them it was our intention to fight to the death. This is about all there is to the black flag matter. It caused the enemy to stand up and fight like men or run like cowards.

That is the only kind of an outlaw Quantrell was.

Now, as to the rest of us, it's different. We were outlaws. There's no gainsaying that. Our living depended on our acts as lawless men. We had no other means of obtaining our meat and bread. But our lives as outlaws are wholly separate from our lives as soldiers, though there was no material difference in our conduct. We preyed on the enemy during the war, while the enemy preyed on us then, and have kept it up ever since with that iniquitous pension roll.

The government raised the black flag over us and by this

act told us it did not think we would make model prisoners, and for this reason they preferred capturing our dead bodies to our living ones. They could bury the dead out of their sight, but our living bodies they would be compelled to feed until they could get the scaffold ready for our execution.

Now, I trust the reader will keep it well in mind that while we were fighting the innumerable battles of the West we fought them as patriotic soldiers—fighting for the Southern cause—for what we thought our duty to our country and our firesides. These are the battles I am relating and are wholly segregated from those acts of lawlessness which were enacted after Appomattox, and all who bore arms against the Federal government had been permitted to lay down their arms and return to the peaceful pursuits of life—all but us, who had fought the Western battles and fought them with a ferociousness not equalled in any warfare in the history of the world. These are the battles I am relating—the battles of the few against the many.

Now, I appreciate the fact that many readers of this book would prefer to read of the career of our freebooters, but it must be bourne in mind that a general pardon has never been issued. We have been pardoned for offenses that we were supposed to have committed and for which we were indicted in the courts, but the government has no power to pardon any one before his indictment. For many of our depredations we were never indicted, consequently never pardoned, and for this reason I will have to ask the public's indulgence when I slur over a part of our career and side step the issue without committing myself or comrades. But I shall stick strictly to the truth in all instances and if circumstances do not permit me to tell the whole truth, I shall not tell a falsehood. But enough of this. I am a little premature in these remarks, any way, for they would fit in better a little later on—after I shall have finished the records of our career as soldiers. The reader can well imagine the strenuous life we were leading in the West when the records will show that there was not a day of inaction for us, not a night that we laid down on our earthen couches that did not threaten our destruction.

Soon after the battle of Walnut Creek came another

bloody battle, which some have classified as one of the bloodiest in "The War of the West." This was the battle of Independence, Mo.

Colonel Upton Hays had been in the hills of the Blue and the Sny for several weeks, recruiting his command and levying toll against the enemy in the shape of munitions of war and laying in a supply of horses and provisions. His success in this settlement was always good. Boys who were considered too young to join yesterday, were old enough to day to make valiant soldiers. Race suicide did not exist in any section of Missouri, and for this reason a crop of boys was ever maturing, and as soon as their tender arms had grown long enough to reach the trigger of a shotgun, they were ready and anxious for the field.

After Colonel Hays had filled up the gaps in his command and added a few more thereto, he found himself at the head of the best equipped army in the history of his career.

Quantrell, too, had been busy in the same enterprise and now had the best fighting force that had ever enlisted under his banner, numbering one hundred men.

When Quantrell learned through his spies that Colonel Hays was in the settlement, he sought and obtained an interview with the gallant commander, which resulted in the juncture of their commands.

Colonel Hays' command numbered six hundred, while Quantrell's, as above stated, was one hundred. With this formidable array they felt equal to encounter half the Federal forces.

At this time Independence was garrisoned by one thousand soldiers under Buell—many veterans and some, like ours, who had never tasted the mingled wormwood and nectar of war.

Taking every precaution for the safety of his men, Colonel Hays sent out spies broadcast to ascertain what strength might oppose our retreat from Independence in case this expedient became necessary. In our party were Younger, Yeager, Miller, Muir and myself. As we never ventured out without some sort of thrilling adventure, little else was expected on this occasion, and we were, as ever, ready for emergencies as a hornets' nest.

When we reached the town of Newport we found the place held by twenty-five of Jennison's men—the most tempting target that was ever set up for guerilla practice.

Dressed in Federal raiment, we had no trouble entering the town, and, having entered, found the twenty-five lords and masters of the village totally unprepared for hostile visitors.

As it happened, the soldiers were scattered throughout the little village, about seven or eight in a bunch. As soon as we had gotten near enough to the closest covey we opened the ball to martial music, and at the first volley four of the jayhawkers fell. Another squad ran to the aid of their suffering comrades, and in a few minutes twelve corpses, clad in jayhawker regimentals, lay stark and still in the streets. By this time the rest of the little command had reached shelter and from their redoubt opened fire on us with no effect, but it was the part of discretion not to expose ourselves to such a fire, and we therefore withdrew, and that right hurriedly.

I was told afterwards that the survivors crowned themselves with wreaths of immortelles for their gallant victory, and I trust they did get a lot of satisfaction out of witnessing our rapid flight, but they did us no damage, not even wounding a man or a horse.

Now, while I have to admit that this little scrap was but a bloody period on a page of red letters, still if our men at Gettysburg had inflicted proportionately as much damage on the enemy as we did on this occasion, there would have been no excuse for Appomattox. Terms of peace would have been discussed in the White House instead.

After this little brush we hastened on back to our command, and as we were galloping down the road, the noise our own horses' feet made drowned all other similar sounds, and as we turned a curve in the road we were right in the midst of fifty mounted blue coats, whom we found in a very ugly temper. Jerking our horses to a stand, the brutes were almost thrown on their haunches, but nimble animals that they were, they responded to the reins, and the next instant we wheeled and sought safety through a blind lane that ran at right angles to our course. Into this weed grown avenue we dashed furiously, but had not gone more than a hundred

yards with the enemy close in behind, firing at every jump, when this aisle came to a sudden end with a fence across it.

My horse had encountered such fences before, and not even waiting my command, rammed it with his powerful chest, rotten rails gave way and let us through, and we gained the sheltering woods beyond without the loss of a man or horse and not a wound to bear testimony to this little adventure. However, the pursuers did not escape so lightly, for they lost three of their gallant fellows killed and several wounded.

We made our way back to headquarters without having accomplished much in the way of locating the enemy in any considerable numbers, but the few whom we relieved of their commissions may have saved many of our gallant boys.

Meanwhile Hays and Quantrell had formulated their plans, and on the morning of August 11, 1862, the combined forces of these two commanders fell on the enemy at Independence unaware, and having shot down all the pickets, the guards fell before our guns and the battle commenced.

It was a desperate fight, and the Federals, though half dressed, as it was then just daybreak, showed the true metal of gallant soldiers. For a full hour the battle raged with fury.

As it was the first time Buell had met such numbers at such an hour, and such fighters, too, as were opposing him, he seemed for a while completely dazed, but quickly regaining his senses, he retreated to the sheltering walls of a large frame building, and from this frail fortress opened up a terrific firing on us, and our dead were tumbling in every direction, when Quantrell approached Hays and said: "We can't hold our men here and sacrifice them in this cruel manner. We cannot dislodge Buell with our guns. There's but one thing to do, and that is fire Buell's sanctuary." To this Colonel Hays readily assented, on condition that such a possibility existed.

"Yonder is our only hope," said Cole Younger, pointing to a wagon load of hay in the streets.

"Get it," commanded Quantrell. The wagon was rolled up right under the window and set on fire, but many of the boys who served as draft horses in this instance, never

lived to rejoin their comrades. But the noble sacrifice of their lives was the price of a dearly bought victory.

As soon as the hay was in full blaze and its cruel tongues were licking through the window openings, firing from that side ceased, but only to open up with renewed vigor from another angle. But this could not endure long. The fate of the boys within those furnace walls was sealed.

We knew we would only have to play a waiting game now. All who could not get shelter in this building had saved themselves by flight, and there were none to oppose us. Calmly we waited, and when the house became unendurable any longer, a white sheet came fluttering out the window and Buel announced his readiness for unconditional surrender, preferring to meet death beneath the black folds of our banner to being roasted alive.

When he had signified his readiness to surrender, Quantrell commanded him to throw all his guns out the windows, unloaded, and in a few minutes the elements began to rain down a torrent of guns, pistols and swords.

Our men came to "attention" by order of Quantrell, and eagerly watched the boys as they hurried from the doomed building, and so eager were we for their escape, when it was announced that the last man was out, we gave a rousing cheer, which was answered by another from the enemy, happy in their deliverance, and the blue and gray passed in and out among each other in friendly intermingling, shaking hands and congratulating each other, as though each was happy in the turn affairs had taken; and I readily believe they were. At any rate, I know our boys were glad to see the enemy escape such a horrible death from those fearful flames, and I judge they were duly appreciative of the opportunity that gave them such a happy deliverance.

To Buell's amazement and to the amazement of his men as well, we paroled them to a man and let them go their way.

In this engagement our losses were something like one hundred killed and wounded, while the enemy lost only fifty-seven, but it was our victory and came as many victories come—C. O. D., and the cost exceeded by long odds the value.

CHAPTER XIII.

BATTLES, BATTLES, EVER BATTLES!—LONE JACK.

The echoing hills had scarce ceased to reverberate with the roar of cannon and the rattle of musketry when another volcano broke loose in Jackson county and sent its streams of melted lava in intermittent torrents throughout that war infested zone.

Just five days following the battle of Independence, the victory of which was ours at such fearful cost, another and a fiercer battle was fought at Lone Jack, a little hamlet about twelve miles from Independence, consisting of two stores, a large frame building, known as the Cave House; a blacksmith shop, a saloon and postoffice and a few shacks called residences. The oddity of such a hotel in such a place was ludicrous in the extreme, for it could easily have accommodated in one night all the visitors it had any reason to expect in a month.

This town took its name from an old, gnarled and knotty black jack tree which stood on the apex of a little prairie knoll, like an Argus-eyed sentinel keeping vigil over the ever expectant people, who lived in mortal dread of tragedies that lurked ghost-like all about them, waiting the most gruesome hour to come forth and claim their trembling victims.

At this time Colonel Joe Shelby, Colonel Ward Cockrell and John T. Coffey, each at the head of a few hundred men, had come into Missouri from different points, and as Jackson county was then as famous for its fighters as Missouri is now for her mules, it is no wonder that far-seeing generals should turn their hungry eyes in this direction for recruits, but just how they were always supplied would challenge the president of the Anti-Suicide League himself to find out.

The three commands formed a juncture two miles north of Lone Jack and bivouaced in separate fields, so as to render the best assistance in the event of an attack on either camp by the enemy.

That very night Major Foster of the Federal army entered Lone Jack from the south, having in his command

one thousand seasoned veterans, and occupied the town in blissful ignorance of the close proximity of his deadly foe.

Now, it must be admitted that a Lone Jack is not a very strong hand, especially when the enemy, flushed by previous victories, holds another flush up his sleeve, but the morrow would tell the winning hand. After a long march under a blazing August sun it can be well imagined how welcome was night to the tired veterans of both sides, with its refreshing dews and its soft light of stars.

Scarce had we finished our coarse luncheon when half our soldiers fell asleep with a crust of bread in their hands, and others, who had yet the strength and energy, crept off to their tattered blankets or stretched their exhausted forms out on the dew dipped grass and fell asleep before taps were sounded.

The pickets, however, had been posted, and as they tramped their respective beats a messenger came dashing into our midst with dispatches for Colonel Cockrell, who, on this occasion, was in command.

Instantly "to arms" went down the ranks and every man, as sleepy as he was, rose with gun in hand, ready for the invisible foe.

The information the messenger brought was to the effect that the Federals had occupied Lone Jack, and through this messenger we obtained pretty reliable information concerning the numbers of the army of occupation, their fighting strength and strategic position.

We quickly formed in line, each captain having in charge his own little hand full of men.

When I had my men in battle array and waited and waited for the "forward march," it was easy to see that they wanted to fight right then and there or return to their earthen couches, but we waited and waited; then the order came to break ranks and sleep on our guns.

Five minutes later all my men were fast asleep.

At 4 o'clock in the morning our bivouac was raised, and the hurry and bustle incident to a heavy engagement was begun. In less than five minutes we were ready for the fray—still we waited. Five o'clock—still we waited. Six o'clock came and with it the rays of an August sun rose

above the skirt of woods to the east of us. Then came the long waited for order to march.

How in the name of reason Colonel Cockrell ever got it into his head that we had any hopes of surprising the enemy at this late hour has puzzled many a military man of greater dimensions than the Little Captain who wore a name in "The War of the West" that will remain a secret, I trust, for all time.

Our united forces were very little short of the enemy's numbers, and now that we were marching upon their position, all odds were in favor of the foe. What a blunder! And how different would have been the results had we only struck them in the dead of the night.

Advancing in solid phalanx, we drove the pickets in, then struck the enemy's left flank, which was pretty well concealed by a hedge row, but quickly drove them back on the main body, where a stubborn stand was maintained and where the enemy, supported by their artillery, poured a stream of death into our ranks.

This was another time that we had to have the enemy's guns, and with wild yells, we dashed upon the gunners, not permitting one of them to escape.

Seeing the guns in our possession and soon feeling the effects of them in their own ranks, the enemy fell back, but quickly rallied, and after a desperate grapple repossessed their cannon, which they turned on us with deadly effect.

It did not take a prophet to foretell our fate if we remained in front of those death dealing dogs of war, and we, therefore, circled the town and fell on the infantry in the middle of the streets, where a hand to hand conflict took place that was terrible in its bloody effects.

Pistols, gun stocks, rocks, planks from the sidewalks, pickets jeered from fences were in common use in this fierce struggle, and brute strength played no inconsiderable part in the slaughter.

It was a battle no longer, but the indiscriminate slaughter of the blue and gray, where brute force had the advantage. Men were soldiers no longer, but ravenous beasts with bloody fangs and cruel claws, who lashed and slashed in bestial fury for the mad love of legal murder. Inch by

inch the Federals were forced back and finally broke for cover, the greater portion finding shelter in the Cave House, others in such buildings as could hide them from the view of their demented pursuers.

Once in the Cave House the Federals seemed safe for a while, and from the windows of this structure they poured into us volley after volley of death, fairly sweeping the streets with their murderous fire.

To dislodge them seemed a task beyond our strength or prowess, for in their fortified position we were almost entirely at their mercy. There was but one hope for us—the torch—but how to apply it was another matter. We had used turpentine balls. Instantly the dread word ran through the ranks, and in a little while the cruel weapons were ready.

Cole Younger, Frank James and I volunteered with about eight others, to throw the burning brands against the building, and in a few minutes the black, sooty smoke and the lurid flames mingled in a whirlwind of terrible grandeur, and the building was doomed.

Of the eleven who dashed through that storm of destruction, only four lived to return—Cole, Frank, myself and, I think, Tom Maddox.

The house soon became untenable, but still the enemy held out and continued to use their guns with deadly effect. I saw through the window a desperate soldier hurriedly load his carbine, then rushing to the opening, jumped, discharging his gun in our faces as he sped through space. Poor boy, we could have saved our lead, the fall alone would have killed him.

The cruel, hungry flames kept creeping up nearer and nearer the plucky boys, who were forced to shield their powder from the flames while they loaded their guns.

The terrible holocaust was now like a corner in perdition, yet the dauntless boys in blue held out against the terrible heat and continued to shower their messengers of death in our faces. It was no longer a terrestrial scene, but one worth a place of mention in the midst of eternal brimstone. The shrieks of the perishing, the wails of the wounded, the rattle of musketry and the crackle of flames mingled their discordant noises in one wild pandemonium of damnation.

Yet the plucky boys in blue held out, nor thought of surrendering.

With a mighty crash part of the building tumbled in, sending up great billows of fire and smoke like the eruption of a volcano. Then and not till then did those dauntless boys give up the building and make a dash through our lines for the sheltering woods, but few of them ever reached this place of safety.

After the collapse of the Cave House, other buildings began to disgorge their holdings and another hand to hand fight in the streets ensued. Hammer and tongs, gun and sabre, tooth and nail the battle raged until the flower and strength of the Federal army lay dead in the streets.

At last the gallant Foster yielded to the inevitable and surrendered the remnant of his army to Southern valor and guerilla desperation. The Federals cheerfully signed their paroles, and together the two late antagonists were passing in and out among each other in one mighty effort to stay the terrible pangs of the wounded and to bury the dead, and it was pathetic in the extreme to see this gallant commander as he bent over the lifeless form of his young brother and pressed upon his cold brow the last farewell kiss of love and devotion.

In this awful engagement the Federals lost more than two hundred killed and five hundred wounded. Our losses were about the same. If there is such a thing as comic tragedy or tragic comedy, it was fully exemplified in this terrible scene of carnage, for in the midst of the hand to hand grapple, I saw one of my men desperately disputing strength with one of the foe. They were locked in each other's embrace, and I saw my man, John Welch, as he clasped the enemy tight against his breast with one arm, while with the other he forced his antagonist's head backward till I distinctly heard his neck break; then Welch released his grip and said between his grinding teeth:

"Now, go git it fixed, durn ye! They's a blacksmith shop 'round the corner."

CHAPTER XIV.

TRIP TO TEXAS—BATTLE ON THE BANKS AND IN THE STREAM OF THE CANADIAN RIVER— CAPTAIN HOLT'S NARROW ESCAPE—SCRAP AT HOPE, ARK.

After the terrible battle of Lone Jack, where once more we had snatched an inglorious victory from the charnel house of dead hopes, the captains were called into consultation, which resulted in the disbanding of our united forces, for it was plain to see that we could not survive many more victories like the ones we were then enjoying. We could do more effective work in small squads. This, to me was always a patent fact, nevertheless, when superior officers called for what assistance I could give them, I never failed to respond, though many times I did so against my better judgment. Our fighting had assumed all the earmarks and characteristics of the vast armies of the nation and was fast losing its guerilla features. I was a guerilla and a guerilla I would remain. I would live like a guerilla, fight like a guerilla and like a true guerilla die in the fight rather than perish in some filthy dungeon or stand up and be shot down with my hands tied behind me.

With the triumph of Lone Jack, Independence, the Blue Cut and other memorable victories always fresh in my memory, I determined to fight no more pitched battles with the regulars, but hunt out my own game and chase it to suit my pleasure, or be chased to suit the whims of the enemy.

After we had disbanded, Holt, with the fragments of his command, and I, with my tattered veterans and a few raw recruits, started out on a campaign of our own, and it was necessary to go where the quarry was in smaller herds and their cruel horns not so formidable as those we had encountered every day of our existence in Jackson, Cass and Clay counties.

With these ideas in our minds, Holt and I struck the trail for Texas, but where Cockrell, Ward, Shelby, Quantrell, Younger and the rest of the commanders went, I have never known, or it has escaped my memory, but as this is only my personal history, which I am attempting to write without involving others, it is a matter of little concern

what they did, so far as these records are concerned. But Captain Holt will be a part of this history for a while longer, as our exploits are inseparable for quite a while.

Arkansas and Texas at this time were teeming with jay-hawkers who had never participated in a pitched battle, and who knew no warfare but the assassination of the helpless old and the defenseless young. It was altogether probable that we could find all the excitement we wanted in those regions and mete out a just retribution to the most cowardly set of assassins and thieves that ever levied tribute against a defenseless people.

Our trip to the South lay through the Crickasaw nation, where we had some friends among the Indians, who extended to us every courtesy within the scope of their primitive ethics, which was quite a pleasant diversion, I can assure you, for their horde of fresh dog, stale horse and coyote was at our disposal with all the welcome of the unsalted corn bread in the larders of our friends at home.

Leaving our friends in the nation, we hurried on and after a long, tiresome, exceedingly dry and excessively hot journey, came at last to the Canadian river, which seemed to be on the rampage from its tributaries, far away, as no rains had fallen in that settlement in many moons.

The current was so strong we realized the impossibility of swimming straight across it, and therefore decided to quarter the stream and make the current assist instead of retard our progress. I was in the lead at the time, and, plunging in, quartered across and came to the bank about fifty yards further down than where I had plunged in.

Others quickly followed my example, and just for form's sake alone, Holt remained behind to protect our rear, though there seemed nothing to protect it against, as not a human soul was in sight and the country was open for many miles in the direction from whence we had come.

On the other side, where I had landed, the banks were almost precipitous, but there remained an angle, and with a snort and a bound my nimble horse scaled it, while others followed close behind.

When about half of the command had crossed over a thunderous noise, accompanied by smoke and lightning, broke loose in the undergrowth, and a stream of lead came

pouring on us, relieving me of my hat and several of the boys of baggage much more valuable. Three of my comrades fell beside me. This was the kind of fighting I was in quest of and now that I had found it, what was I to do with it? There was but one thing to do, and that was to charge the invisible foe, and into the tangled mass I dashed with half my command, and a bloody fight took place.

At the beginning of the attack half of my men were in the water and too busily engaged in their efforts to get across to render any assistance, but urging their mounts to the top of their speed, they soon gained terra firma and fought with the desperation of female tigers.

In half an hour the enemy's fire began to slacken and the next minute they were in full retreat, leaving us with a glory victory that we knew not how to handle.

When the battle was over and the field was ours, I rode back to the river to see what tale of terror its murky waters would tell, and there, to my unspeakable delight, I found Captain Holt clinging to a limb with the mad determination to sustain himself till help could reach him. His horse had been shot under him and the captain's foot, getting caught in the stirrup, made it impossible for the horse to float on down the stream without carrying his master with him.

Realizing the seriousness of the situation, I hurried my horse into the stream, reached down and cut the stirrup leather and let the dead animal float on down the maddened current. Holt held on to my horse's tail, and in a few minutes was safe on the bank with his comrades.

In this battle we lost eight men killed, none wounded. The enemy lost fifty killed and about twenty wounded. One of the wounded men having told us that the Federals had four hundred men in this scrap, and stated that the reason they retreated was because their ammunition was exhausted and they had no idea of the number that opposed them.

We knew it would be folly to remain to minister to the wounded, for in a little while they would have all the attention they needed, for as soon as that stampeded army could get more ammunition they would return to the rescue of their fallen comrades.

Captain Holt took possession of a horse which had belonged to one of our men who had found a watery grave in

the river, and we continued our journey without further hindrance.

From here we went on in to Texas, crossed the Red River at Paris and pushed on to Sulphur Springs, where we rested up for several days, then decided to return into Arkansas, where business in our line was always good, for, like a pestilence, the Federals had by this time covered the land.

We rested up a day in Texarkana, and while there learned that the Federals had occupied Hope and, as surprising garrisons was a most thrilling diversion, we pushed on to this village, which we found to be garrisoned by one hundred gents in blue. Having lost eight men in the battle of the Canadian river, we now mustered only thirty-two men, but they were veterans and knew the business of guerilla warfare. Two miles west of Hope we halted to freshen up our horses for the mad dash and get-away, and to plan our attack. Then, mounting our horses, we rode leisurely along the road till we were in about a quarter of a mile of the village, when we put spurs to our horses and with savage yells dashed into the town, shooting as much to intimidate as to kill. When we came upon the demoralized troops, who were quite a quarter of a mile from their fortifications, which was an old block house on the hill, that bristled with cannon, the fight commenced in deadly earnest, and in a few minutes the streets were strewn with soldiers in their winding sheets of blue.

Their total unpreparedness put them at quite a disadvantage and they sent their lead harmlessly whizzing through the air. It was all over in a few minutes and the survivors gained shelter in the block house, which we would not attempt to capture, for we could not carry it with us and it could do us no damage, as we would not put ourselves in the range of its guns.

After the battle was over and four of our brave fellows lay dead in the streets, along with thirty-five of the enemy, we quitted the town, but were not far away when we detected the enemy in hot pursuit. In the long running fight that followed the enemy lost heavily, but did us no damage, for they rode poor mounts and were about the worst horsemen I have ever seen west of the Mississippi river.

A few miles from Searcy the enemy abandoned the chase and left the country open to us.

At Sugar Loaf Holt and I held a consultation and disbanded, with the understanding that we would pick up what recruits we could and meet ten days later in Jackson county, where we hoped to pick up more recruits to strengthen our forces, with a view to going back into Arkansas at a near date.

CHAPTER XV.

MEETING OF QUANTRELL, HOPE AND DALTON IN JACKSON COUNTY—LITTLE BRUSH AT BROOMFIELD—BACK INTO KENTUCKY UN- DER THE LEADERSHIP OF OUR IDOLIZED CHIEFTAIN.

Agreeable to our prearranged plans, Holt joined me in Jackson county, where, to our delight, we found Quantrell recruiting his command preparatory to crossing the Mississippi river to worry the enemy in West Tennessee and Kentucky.

Our united forces now numbered sixty-five men, among whom were a goodly number of greenhorns, but never a coward. Jackson county had none of them. Having gotten everything ready, we scouted southwards, taking in Poplar Bluff, Mo., and a few counties in Northern Arkansas. There was no prospect of adventure here, so we turned again northward and came again into the land of perpetual turmoil.

Having received information that Bloomfield was in the hands of the state militia we concluded to pay our respects to this little village, just to see how militiamen deported themselves and to see how our raw recruits behaved under fire. The sun was just sinking behind the waving fields of prairie green when the quiet village loomed up before us in the distance.

As was our custom, we rode along leisurely until within a few hundred yards of the garrison, then, with whoops and

yells dashed into their midst. On this occasion Quantrell, Holt and I decided to keep hands off and leave the scrap to the raw recruits, for it was very evident that not much resistance would be offered.

When at the proper distance we gave the order to charge, yell and shoot to kill, and it was a ludicrous sight that would challenge the skill of an Oppen to portray. The green boys rode furiously into the tented village, shooting into the empty tents and mercilessly riding them down. All the time they were yelling like savages and shooting like an army opposed them, while there was not a one of the enemy in sight and not a shot had been fired on them. One of the boys charged a tent from which a rusty stovepipe protruded, and as he rode it down the canvas walls took fire and of all the rearing and bucking a horse ever did, nothing was ever pulled off to equal that ridiculous sight. Up went the horse and at every buck its rider sprang about eighteen inches above the saddle, but managed to come down in the right place every time except the last one. When the horse gave a savage bellow, bowed himself up like a caterpillar and while his rider was in the air, sprang from under him, leaving the unfortunate youth nothing to land on but Mother Earth. Down he came, right in the midst of the blazing tent, but was up in a second and as he dashed through the flames his eyes caught sight of something he coveted. He had not lost his wits, and taking a pole, pushed the fire back and the next instant he was hauling out a fresh killed hog, much to his own delight and everybody else's amusement.

There was no fight at Bloomfield, for the enemy had gotten wind of us and hiked out to the sedge fields, where they hid themselves till we had taken such of their plunder as was most pleasing to our eyes and were on the march again, then a terrible fusillade opened up a full quarter of a mile away and when we turned our horses in that direction they scampered away for the woods, about a quarter of a mile further on.

Here we got a few good horse swaps without having to pay any boot and hurried on.

After this little harmless blow up, we scouted around a while, and as there was nothing of importance going on, we

crossed over into Kentucky. At Moscow we concluded to investigate the transportation facilities of the Mobile & Ohio Railroad and see just what the incoming train contained and how much of its cargo would be of service to our men.

We were not kept long in waiting, for in a few minutes a passenger train came pulling in with her tender piled with cordwood, just loaded at the company's yard, a short distance below town. With a swarthy brakeman at every wheel, she was "pulled down" by the brakemen and "held up" by us.

Without any sort of formality we took charge of the outfit, extracting a dozen Yankee soldiers from divers retreats, who proved to be en route to their garrison stationed at Union City, Tenn.

In the first flush of excitement one of the soldiers fired on us with fatal effect to himself. Aside from this no resistance was offered and no violence done.

I recall with the keenest recollection having interviewed a portly old fellow who represented himself to me as a southern man and a farmer. He talked the one and looked the other, and by this means was permitted to keep his seat without signing a parole. The soldiers, however, were required to subscribe their names to a document promising to be good ever after, and were permitted to re-embark and continue their journey. Some how or other the portly old gentleman weighed on my mind. He certainly talked like a southerner and undoubtedly had the true make-up of the farmer of that section, yet there was something in his manner or his look or his speech that I did not at all like. My first impression was that he belonged to those infamous home guards, which, to me, was an indefacable brand of infamy, for the majority of them were southern men of the J. Iscariot ilk, who repudiated their country, their friends and their neighbors so that, hog like, they could put their feet in the public trough and ram their greedy snouts to the very bottom of Federal swill. But the train sped on at the dizzy pace of fifteen miles per hour, and with it went that self-represented farmer, whose image continued to haunt me. True, I had never seen him before, yet I had seen his

kind, and there was a family likeness that sectional lines could not obliterate.

If I have before stated how obnoxious those rascals were to me, I make no apologies for repeating it, for the most odious human beings to me at that time were that infamous aggregation of cut throats who masqueraded under the high sounding pseudonym of "The Home Guard." Guards, indeed! They were not fit to guard a hog wallow from the depredations of mud turtles, yet they dared pose as the custodians of public weal, when, in fact, they were the disseminators of private woe.

In the long years that have followed those tragic days, I have had no occasion for changing my mind with respect to these cowardly whelps, who, like Poe's Raven, were neither man nor woman, neither beast nor human, but ghouls whose joy seemed to consist in rolling on the human heart a stone. To destroy these perfidious scullions was the greatest joy I experienced during the long career, which was a continuous bloody drama, without music or curtains between acts.

I have fought the enemy face to face on many a field and stood in almost speechless admiration of his dauntless courage, and though many a time he has chased me over the velt and through boggy fens, I have never felt embittered against him for his victory, but whenever news came to me that some poor, inoffensive citizen had fallen into the cruel hands of these minions of the devil, called "Home Guards," I could not repress a feeling of horror nor a craving for revenge, for the fate of any one whom they chose to suspect was sealed.

The Home Guard was always composed of worthless, shiftless scoundrels who were too cowardly to expose their diabolical person to the enemy's fire and too lazy to earn a living by honest means, but sat about the camp fire, drank what bust head whiskey they could obtain without money and without price, and arresting decrepits without a further warrant than that the said decrepit was possessed of such chattels as their insatiable greed craved.

I know that my earthly tenure is not long, but I take considerable comfort in the fact the last of this malicious bunch will soon cross over the Styx, and I sincerely trust Charon will be there with his dug-out ready to receive them, but I

must say, I truly sympathize with the Devil when they fall into his hands.

* * * * *

Leaving Moscow, we journeyed on to Lodgeton, where we pitched camp and remained practically inactive for the space of a week, the longest "vacation" we had ever taken.

One afternoon knowledge came to us that a few blue coats were loafing around the Black Still, six miles from our camp, and that their purpose there was to obtain moonshine by intimidating the proprietor of the joint, which said moonshine they swilled in vast quantities without ever paying a cent for their happy debauch.

To this place I hurried that same afternoon, taking with me five of my picked men, and when we were in about one hundred yards of the Still, the inebriated rascals opened fire on us, then hurried back into the old log shack.

Quickly dismounting, we hitched our horses out of harm's way and stealthily crept up behind trees till we were within a stone's throw of the house, then opened up on them, sending our bullets through mud daubed cracks between the logs.

Evidently our bullets were doing some damage, for the rascals abandoned this shelter and sought better protection behind the forest trees. One poor fellow, in his excitement, sought shelter behind a rose bush, but if he had it to do over again he would never select a botanical garden for a redoubt. That was no fit place for a rose bush, any how. One of the bunch made a dash through the woods, and keeping well behind trees, protected himself till he had reached one of our horses, which he mounted, but in his excitement and inebriated condition put the wrong foot in the stirrup and vaulted in the saddle with his face towards the animal's tail. No self-respecting horse would submit to such an indignity without a protest. This one protested and his rider went whirling over his tail and hit the ground in a sodden lump, but he was up in a minute and fired a shot point blank at the animal which had handled him so ungently. His bullet went wild and before he could fire again his addled head made rapid connection with a ball from one of our guns, which effectually and forever deprived him of any more equestrian adventures.

Meanwhile the other two were peppering away at us from behind trees, but seeing half their number dead, they promised to surrender if we would spare their lives. This we declined to do and sent several shots against their sheltering trees.

In a little while they surrendered unconditionally, threw down their guns and came towards us, "hands up."

One of the men we captured was named Cunningham, and in the course of a conversation with him he told me the portly old fellow I had interviewed on the train at Moscow was Captain Berry of the Watervalley, Ky., Home Guards.

After we had extracted all the information we desired out of these two fellows, they cheerfully signed their paroles, and Cunningham expressed a keen desire to enlist under me, for he said he knew I was Kit Dalton, and that he would rather fight under me than under any Federal he had ever "saw." But we did not need such men in our service, wherefore we let him go on his faithful promise not to further molest old men and helpless women. I hope he kept his promise.

CHAPTER XVI.

TAME SCOUTING—CAPTURE OF A FREIGHT TRAIN AT WATERVALLEY—PLEASANT INTERVIEW WITH THE PORTLY OLD FELLOW—CAPTAIN BERRY OF THE WATERVALLEY HOME GUARD.

After the Black Still escapade we started out again on the scout, like the lion in the scriptures, seeking whom we might devour, but found very little and devoured—not much.

I will mention, parenthetically, that the enemy was also busily engaged in the same laudable enterprise, and I feel reasonably sure that in many instances they reluctantly sought what they feared to find; for, too often for their own good, they caught us and had to call for assistance to help turn us loose. This seemed particularly true a few days after breaking camp at Lodgetown, as we were riding quietly along the road, offering violence to no man, we came to a sharp bend in the road and there, all unaware, came suddenly upon a company of Federals in search of us. They had found us; now what were they to do about it? It was no time for deliberating, but altogether a time for action of the most energetic nature. No sooner were the blue coats exposed to our view than we opened up on them and they on us. In numbers they had at least two to one, but in point of generalship they were positively not in the reckoning. Neither were they our equals in point of marksmanship or equestrians. They rode clumsily and fired awkwardly, doing us absolutely no damage. It was a short battle, and in less than five minutes the whole company was headed the other way and going at break neck speed. We chased them several miles, knocking one from his saddle about every hundred yards. One ludicrous feature of their flight was a poor fellow who had fallen from his horse just because of his inability to hold to the saddle while going at such a wild gait. As soon as he hit the ground he sprang up in the middle of the road, and came in a tilt towards us with both hands held high above his head and loudly begging for his life, as he had just married the day before and had had no opportunity to enjoy his honeymoon.

"Get thee behind me, Satan!" yelled Holt, and we dashed

by him without throwing any impediment in the way of his conjugal felicity. We did not even require him to sign a parole. I trust he and his bride lived happy ever after.

After another mile chase, in which we cut down three other blue coats in the flower of their youth, we turned south and came to Watervalley, where we purposed capturing a freight train, said to be loaded with ammunition for the enemy, then operating with such ruthless hands in our very midst.

We were not in the town more than two hours when we heard the rumbling of distant wheels, and fearing the engineer might be discourteous enough to ignore our signal to stop, we piled a few cross ties on the track, which made it necessary to use the red flag.

On came the ponderous engine, puffing great volumes of smoke and showers of sparks from her stack as she laboriously climbed the grade just below town.

When the engineer saw the ties across the track he knew that some of the railroad machinery had slipped a cog, gave a distress signal and instantly the brakemen were flying along the tops of cars to get to the nearest wheel. By extra hard labor the engine was brought to a stand with her nose right against the pile of ties.

We quickly took possession of the train, but not before forcing the telegraph operator to abandon his keys, then had the train crew rifle such cars as the bills showed contained articles that we needed or specially wanted to deprive the enemy of.

One car contained bagging, one salt, one tobacco, while all the rest were locals and contained junk of every description.

From these local cars we took a quantity of boots and army blankets and were about to turn the train over to the conductor again, when Holt said: "Captain, haven't you overlooked that big M. & O. car?"

I took the way bills from the hands of the conductor again, and glancing over them, found that the car referred to by Holt contained nothing but cartridges.

This was indeed a lucky capture and must be destroyed after we had taken all we could carry. The engineer was forced to cut loose from the train and back the cartridge car far down the track, where it could be burned without danger

to the inhabitants, and as soon as she was properly placed and the crew had gotten to a place of safety, the car was fired, and in about thirty minutes we had the noisiest and most harmless discharge of artillery ever heard in that section.

After this exploit, which we knew would excite the curiosity of our friends, the enemy, we disbanded, five or six men going in a squad.

I took five of my old comrades and went down to visit my old friend Beckham, and while there information reached me that the portly old fellow, Captain Berry, of the Water-valley Home Guard, with six of his bloody minions, was at Casey's Station, about five miles away.

It appeared that the whole country stood in awe of this monster and everywhere I went I heard of his atrocities. He had escaped me once by lying—which I judge was no crime in the circumstances—but now that I had him located it was only a matter of a few hours who remained a day longer in the country that was reeking with his crimes, me or him. Hurriedly eating an early supper, I called my men to me and explained my intentions, and a few minutes later, we, with Beckham, were riding in the direction of Casey's Station.

Arriving at our destination, I learned with chagrin that Berry and his men had just left afoot, but that they would not be gone very long, as they were en route to arrest an in-offensive old farmer about half a mile down the track, and that in all likelihood they would either murder him in his home or bring him back with them.

This was my opportunity.

We hitched our horses at the station, and leaving two guards to look after them, hurried down the track and secreted ourselves in a culvert, where we patiently awaited their return. We did not have to wait long. Berry had the old man under "arrest" and was foully abusing him as they tramped along the hard roadbed above our heads. As they were passing over us, we jumped from our hiding place, and throwing our guns in their faces, ordered their surrender. The only reply we received was a terrible clatter of feet as the wretches hurrid back down the track. Their prisoner did not run. He was evidently willing to trust to

luck rather than the tender mercies of Berry. I ran upon the track as quickly as I could get there and, singling out Berry by his rotundity, cracked down. At the crack of my gun he pitched headlong up and down the rails, and when we reached his side he begged piteously for his life.

"You don't deserve to live, Berry," said I. "You deserve to die at the hands of the old man whom you are persecuting, and that shall be your fate, if you live long enough for the old man to get here."

We called the old gentleman, a Mr. Thompson, and when he came up I offered him the opportunity of evening up matters with his cruel captor. Berry begged piteously and Thompson, looking compassionately on his would-be murderer, lifted his eyes to heaven and said: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, sayeth the Lord."

Had I been determined to dispose of the old rascal there, I would have had to be his executioner, for I do not believe I had a man in my little command who could have done so foul a murder. As for myself, I would as soon thought of killing an old wooden legged woman on a pair of crutches.

Berry still begged for mercy, promising to live an upright life if we would give him the opportunity. He said he was not prepared to die anyway, and that he wanted to confess his sins and be forgiven before he met his Creator.

"Well, Berry, said I, "You deserve a felon's death, but I am going to give you an opportunity to get well so you can bushwhack me as soon as you are able to hobble out." Then I ordered my boys to help me pack the ponderous old fellow to a house about one hundred yards distant, and here we left him to fight it out with his Maker. Then we returned to Beckham's, but the next morning sent to inquire the old fellow's fate. He had gotten religion in the night and passed into the great beyond, happy in the forgiveness of his sins.

Did I feel any compunctions of conscience at the destruction of this foul monster? Did Perseus deplore his conquest of Madusa?

I had struck a trial balance in behalf of the many who had felt the weight of this monster's iron hand, and thus forever closed the account.

When the Home Guard heard of the fate of their chief-

tain, they sounded the alarm and all other Home Guards sent their quota of men to apprehend the daring rebel who had the hardihood to come into their very midst and slay their chieftain.

Soon the country was swarming with blue coats again, the air began to sizzle with the growing intensity of heat, and hoping to find a more congenial clime west of the Mississippi, I struck out again for our old haunts about Jackson, Cass and Clay counties.

Where Quantrell was at this time I could not learn.

I was not in Missouri more than two weeks, when I heard that Quantrell was en route to Jackson county, bubbling over with some great scheme, and you may rest assured I hailed his advent with joyous acclaim. Some of my old boys were also there, and when I felt sure Quantrell had planned some bold adventure, I quickly mustered up a little band of thirty men and awaited his arrival.

A few days later I joined my chieftain and learned to my unspeakable delight that it was his purpose to make a raid on Lawrence, Kan., the most thoroughly despised Federal stronghold in all the West. His old captains were scattered throughout the three dependable counties and soon answered to his call.

There was Anderson, with a pretty fair command; Holt, with the best he ever had enlisted under his banner; Captain Grigg, Captain Jarrett, Captain Shepherd, and last, but by no means least, Captain "Kitty Poole" all eager for the raid and burning with a passion to move on the old home of John Brown without delay.

CHAPTER XVII.

LAWRENCE, KANSAS—JOHN BROWN, JIM LANE, JENNISON.

Of all the histories that have ever been written since the god of battle first raised his frowning face from the realms of chaotic blackness and from his horrid hair shook pestilence and war, there has never appeared one so foul with slaughter, so debased in spirit, so vengeful in its gory lusts, so steeped in malice, and so pestilential in its universal dissemination of falsehood as those wretched accounts which have appeared from time to time concerning Quantrell's raid of the little city known as Lawrence, Kan. That it was a bloody and terrible slaughter, there is no gainsaying. That Lawrence reaped the whirlwind in consequence of having sown the wind is in direct conformity to holy writ, and an innocent generation paid the penalty for their fathers' sins. The name of John Brown of Ossawatimie is a spectre that should haunt any community that once gave to this imp of the perverse the glad hand of welcome and suffered him to breathe that atmosphere which God intended for creatures He had made; and I cannot refrain from making public apology for inserting this name so steeped in crime, so reeking with the blood of innocent lives, so debauched in civil life, and so stained with general slaughter, even in the records of an outlaw. The bloody history of the terrible West would be as incomplete without the pseudo hero of Ossawatimie as Erebus without Pluto, Faust without Mephisto, or the great eternal smelting works without his Satanic majesty. It was he who put the wormwood of hate into the milk of human kindness and forced the noxious draft down the unwilling throats of men who yet live to curse his memory.

In their misdirected zeal many gentlemen of the cloth have compared this wretch to Jesus Christ, but how the comparison comes in is certainly not visible to the naked eye. Christ died that others might live; John Brown lived that others might suffer and die, and that is about the closest comparison that I have been able to figure out.

In the commercial pursuits of life Brown was an absolute failure; as a reformer, an anarchist, as an instructor, a

teacher of sedition, as a statesman, a Cataline, as a leader, a Robespierre, in craft and villany, and as a private citizen, a common horse thief. In this connection he might be more fittingly compared with that luckless rustler who perished on Cavalry at the right hand of the lowly Nazarene. As a sacrilege, this comparison has hardly a parallel in the annals of history. Was it Brown's purpose to sacrifice his life for the sable cause he espoused? Religious bigots claim that it was. If that were the case, then he must have realized his fondest ambition. Granting that this be true, why such a stubborn armed resistance in the old engine house, and why did he not surrender till all his men were killed, and he himself punctured like a pincushion? No, Mr. Brown died because he had outraged statutory, common and divine laws. He died because twelve level headed, patriotic citizens said it was his due. He lived among the strife of his own creation and died because he did not have the strength to oppose those who sought to take away that life which was a blot on the name of the human race.

There are reputable men now living in the zone of this fakir's western operations who unhesitatingly declare that this pious fraud established the Freedman's Aid Society, with headquarters in Lawrence, for the purpose of personal gain, and for no other reason.

The famous "Underground Railroad" was a feat of his psychological engineering, the purpose of which was to steal out slaves from the slave states and kite them across the boundary, where they were held for a ransom, and whenever a reward commensurate with his greed was offered for the return of the "fugitive" he was delivered to his master for a price agreed upon. This being done through his henchmen; not, however, before he had had an understanding with the "fugitive," that on his second escape, he would return to him (Brown) to be recaptured and the money derived from the second and all subsequent returns of the captive would be equally divided between the said captive and Brown.

I know positively of one case where this kind of high financing was performed in triplicate, with a valuable slave belonging to one Mr. Tom McGee, a resident of Arkansas.

Now, concerning this "Underground Railroad," which, by

the way, was no railroad at all, but a secret avenue by which slaves were stolen and kited across the boundary, a word of explanation may not be ill-advised. This method of doing business took its name from its similarity in operation to that of a railroad company.

It had its president, board of directors, engineers, conductors and station masters, all of whom received a monetary compensation for services rendered, and the earnings of the company were so great that weekly dividends were declared.

John Brown, Jim Lane and Jennison were the moving spirits of this enterprise, and I dare say obtained more money through this infamous source in one week than they were capable of earning in other pursuits in a year.

This is the patriotism that filled John Brown's breast and fired his distorted heart with such Christian zeal in behalf of the poor, down-trodden slaves, whose fathers a few years back were eating each other in the jungles of Africa. These were the gentry he sought to liberate and enfranchise on an equal footing with that indomitable race which today rules the world. These are the citizens who have been given as much power in the making of laws to govern the world as Bryan, Woodrow Wilson, Taft and Roosevelt.

To cloak better his nefarious operations, Brown took on the pious air of a Christian deliverer, and thereby obtained vast quantities of money from misguided Eastern philanthropists, who after Brown's execution, either committed suicide or fled the country. Every school child is familiar with Brown's execution at Harper's Ferry, Va., but few are acquainted with the other members of this triumvirate, for in all likelihood the historian has been too decent to desmire the pages of history with their foul doings. Jennison and Lane were more fortunate than their leader, Brown, and as the historian has related, kept their heads on their shoulders by carefully protecting them from danger. By some means they managed to keep themselves in the good graces of the Federal government and were permitted to ply their dirty trade till put out of business by the formal emancipation of slavery. John Brown was the scamp who sowed the seeds of discord in Lawrence and taught fathers how sublime a thing it is to plunge the bloody dagger into the heart of his

son for the sake of patriotism; and son how noble a thing it is to murder father for the sake of Federal patronage.

Lawrence, Kan., was his strong city, and as the sequel will show, sacrificed its corporate life as a just punishment for giving aid and shelter to the most infamous fanatic that ever halloed "Halleluiahs" to drown the wails of distress that his bloody operations caused.

Can it be wondered at, then, that the men in whose hearts flowed one drop of the cavalier's blood should feel embittered against the town that had driven Southern chivalry from its borders in order that this viper might eat, drink and be merry, and gloat with fiendish pride over the wrecks and ruins he had wrought? What greater blight could wither the hopes of a community than the presence of John Brown, Jennison and Jim Lane? What greater curse could afflict a people than the presence of this triumvirate, which recognized no law but greed; no authority but bestial lust?

It was not my privilege to meet up with the redoubtable Brown, for "John Brown's body lay moulding in the clay" several years before I donned my war regimentals. But my personal acquaintance with Jim Lane and Jennison, his bloody satraps, and my knowledge of the devastation and suffering caused by these heartless villains, justifies me in expressing myself in language that would bar this book from the mails.

No punishment could have been too severe for a community whose sympathies these rapacious renegades enjoyed or whose cowardice prevented a vigorous protest against their infamous machinations.

On the 10th day of August, in the year of our Lord 1863, Quantrell issued an order for all his captains to report to him at his headquarters on Captain Purdee's farm on the Little Blue, and when we were assembled he quickly made known the object of his call, and having harangued us relative to Lawrence, Kan., and the lecherous scoundrels who held it as in the hollow of their hands, he stated plainly that it was his purpose to raze this nest of vipers to the ground, and called on all the captains for an expression.

When several of them had signified a willingness to join in the raid, a vote was taken and, as nearly as I recall the incident, it was in this manner:

The roll of captains would be called alphabetically and each name was called the captain would answer to his name and cast his vote, and assign a cause for the way he voted.

Captain Anderson—"To Lawrence; she has sown the wind, let her reap the whirlwind."

Captain Grigg—"On to Lawrence—because Quantrell wills it."

Captain Holt—"Lawrence loves the black man. We'll give her a taste of the black flag."

Captain Poole—"On to Lawrence. An eye for an eye."

Captain Todd—"And a tooth for a tooth."

Captain Shepherd—"Lawrence till Lawrence is no more."

We spent several days making preparations for the raid for Quantrell had promised us it should be the bloodiest raid in the annals of history, and we prepared accordingly.

On the 20th we raised camp and in the dead of night set out on our awful mission of vengeance.

The thriving city was garrisoned by two thousand seasoned Federal troops, whose fort lay directly over the sluggish stream that wound its way through the outskirts of the village. In garrisoned towns the commanding officers lived in the city, enjoying all the luxuries that could be obtained of the intimidated people, leaving the soldiers in the tented village arranged in the most advantageous places in case of an attack from the enemy. Two rows of tents stretched their white walls along the main highway leading to the village, each tent containing four soldiers. Six pickets were stationed about two hundred yards down the road to sound the alarm of approaching danger, but, as is usually the case in the dull stupid hours of the early morning their sense of danger was lulled to rest by the drowsy stillness that pervades slumbering nature ere the sun has risen with its cheerful call to active pursuits. Before they were aware of our presence we dashed upon them, and left them where they had stood to keep watch and ward over the spirits that flew past them into the peaceful realms of the great hereafter. Up to this time Jim Lunn, who you will remember as having shot through the inoffensive smokestack at the time of the capture of the Federal transport on the Cumberland, was the black flag bearer.

In the furious charge that followed the fall of the pickets, Jim's horse stepped on some willow poles that lay in a depression across the road and fell to the ground, pitching Jim headlong into the dust. As it was absolutely necessary that the black flag go in front of the advancing host, I jumped down, grabbed the flag, and with it rushed to the front. Jim gained possession of his mount and joined us just as the battle opened up on the tented villages. Into these canvas dwellings we rode our furious chargers, shooting at everything that showed any sign or semblance of life. At the first onslaught the soldiers, half awakened, rose from their dreams of peace and plenty, and without dressing, rushed out to ascertain what the trouble might be. Many a poor fellow got swift death instead of the knowledge he sought. In a little while the terror stricken soldiers were running helter-skelter, without clothing or arms, seeking their safety in flight. It was not more than a minute before they were in the midst of the city, yelling frantically and calling to the people to go forth in defense of their lives and property. Our charge turned into an indiscriminate fight, each soldier selecting his own method and going his own way, undisputed by any authority. It was a battle no longer, but the slaughter of men too terror stricken to surrender and too wild with the fright that possessed them to offer any effective resistance. For three hours the terrible slaughter went on. Then seeing the utter ineffectiveness of such resistance as they were offering, soldiers and citizens alike made a rush for the sheltering walls beyond the Kaw. With seventy-five or a hundred men I chased the fugitives to the walls of the barracks, bristling with cannon, which could not open fire on us because of the serious results that might attend their own men, and left the route strewn with the dead. When I returned from the chase Quantrell had all the officers, who were domiciled in the hotel, under guard and was ordering the people from the building, which was foredoomed to destruction by fire. The proprietor of the hostelry, whom we knew to be a rank Abolitionist, and a disciple of Jim Lane and Jennison, was piteously beseeching Quantrell to spare his joint; several women were frantically adding their importuning to those

of the landlord, but to all Quantrell returned a most decided negative.

"But it's the only way I've got of making a living," protested the landlord.

"Just think how fortunate you are to be alive," said Quantrell. "Just look about you and see the unfortunate fellows who will never be troubled again with the meat and bread question. You are fortunate not to be numbered with them.

Then there rushed out a most beautiful little female Yankee, and, doing the Delsarte in a most pronounced manner, threw her hands on Quantrell's shoulders and asked if he would not spare the hotel for her sake.

"Is it yours?" queried the inflexible Quantrell.

"No, but it is my home now, and I do think you ought to spare it for gallantry's sake."

"Where's your husband, madam?" asked Quantrell.

"Oh, you are cruel; you are a heartless monster!" she shrieked, as she wheeled and left.

Her husband was a fugitive lieutenant.

When the women saw they could make no impression on the iron will of the determined guerrilla leader, they betook them in great haste to gather up their effects, and as soon as they were out of the building the torch was applied and it shared the fate of its comrade inns.

Meanwhile, the streets continued to flow with blood and death and desolation was on all sides. The flower of the army was dead, but the commanders, cowardly whelps, saved themselves by flight. Speer of The Tribune was dead. Palmer of The Journal ceased to write his vitriolic philippics against the South, Trask of The State Journal gallantly offered up his life on his country's altar. Lane saved himself by escaping to the fort.

General Collamore, overcome with fear of falling into the hands of his enemy, jumped in a well to save himself but forgot how to jump out again and so perished like the cellar toad he was—with water on the brain, it is thought.

Massachusetts street, where the riff-raff of the old world down-easters and niggers were encamped, learning the most lessons of war, was swept as with a besom. Scavenger from the slums of Ireland, Germany, Norway and Sweden

nihilists from Russia, and anarchists from Poland and, runaway niggers from every portion of the south were there, manoeuvring and learning how to handle American guns to train on the Southland. They all perished in the streets before they had learned how to pull a trigger in the English language.

All male adults found in the city were destroyed, and that without mercy. Some were slain under counters, some in dry goods boxes and one poor fellow, a little more daring than the rest, sought refuge in a coffin. He remained there.

It was now a battle no longer, but a butchery of the bloodiest sort. Merciless murder? Of course it was. Heartless in its savagery? Most assuredly. We went into that pest hole for that one purpose, but we did expect the resistance of soldiers and men, instead of which we met with cowards, renegades and Kansas Red Legs, all pleading instead of shooting; begging instead of fighting.

Was it cold blooded murder on our part? No, it was not. Our blood was hot enough in all faith, for we had had just provocation on many and many an occasion. We fought to avenge the cruel murder of our loved ones. Quantrell had the memory of a brutally murdered brother and the recollection of his own sad fate—left beside this butchered brother to die. Anderson had the memory of a charming and loving sister crushed among the falling timbers of an old prison in Kansas City, where she had been cruelly incarcerated without justice or reason. Cole Younger carried into the battle the image of an old, gray-haired father, robbed and murdered by the gory hands of those notorious Kansas Red Legs. Holt had—well, a brace of good pistols, so had I, and we also had a keen inclination to use them. I will not attempt to justify myself for the part I played in this little piece of unpleasantness, though I had grievances enough to whet my appetite for revenge.

It was not long before the whole town was one seething, writhing mass of flames, a pandemonium of crashing houses and heavy explosions, a jargon of shrieks and wails and pleadings, a bedlam of tragic confusion and a holocaust of damnation.

The city was ours and the fullness thereof, and I have to admit that the lute attending the destruction of this once

prosperous city was something awful to contemplate, but no worse than is usually the case when a much despised stronghold falls into the hands of a long waiting enemy.

With the town in our possession we had but to reach forth and take possession of the things that seemed good in our sight, and much of it was there, too.

When the trumpet sounded for assembly, we were too overloaded with plunder to respond.

Calico, domestic, homespun, linseys, blue jeans and bluer denim, we had in wholesale quantities and when we marched out of the town we must have looked like unto a dry goods caravan crossing the desert.

One ridiculous fellow had his horse laden with tin buckets, tin cans, pie plates, skillets and coffee pots till he looked like a perambulating tin mine. Another had up before him a live hog, which was lustily protesting against the indignity in fierce and piercing screams.

As we evacuated the town, Quantrell put me in command to guard the rear and in less than an hour it seemed that my busy day was yet to come, for in the distance I could see a cloud of dust arising and I knew the enemy had reorganized their shattered forces and were coming in pursuit. I gave the alarm and the scene that followed beggared the delineation of a cartoonist.

The men ahead put spurs to their horses and in the rough jolting, calico of all hues and colors, domestics and other dry goods became untied and flowed behind the riders in long flaunting billowy, varicolored waves. There streamed in the wind the gory banner of turkey red calico, the black pennant of nun's veiling and the white truce of domestics in intermingling waves, and behind them came the rear guard, like an avalanche passing through a department store. We lost much of our plunder on the way, but still had more than we could judiciously give away in a month.

The pursuing party proved to be Jim Lane, who judiciously managed to stay far enough behind to keep out of range of our deadly guns and close enough in to fancy he was routing the enemy with great slaughter.

I do not know the number of dead we left in the desolated city. If I have ever known I have conveniently forgotten, and I will not hunt up the records to refresh my

memory. Our own loss was only twenty-one men, and in all likelihood most of them perished from overwork.

Thus ended the most blood curdling battle and the most ruthless destruction of life and property ever fought for record in the trans-Mississippi department.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SKIRMISHES IN MISSOURI—BACK TO KENTUCKY—DEATH OF QUANTRELL.

After Lawrence came a rest. We needed it and were now financially able to indulge ourselves in rustic luxuries for a season.

Quantrell was well pleased with his work of destruction. Thirty Red Legs had murdered his brother and thought they had murdered him, too. He had up to this time killed twenty-one of them with his own hands. There yet remained nine alive. He would not be content till his own hands had given them their everlasting furlough. They lived in Missouri and Kansas. He had them spotted and patiently waited till he could fall upon them. Two weeks following the fall of Lawrence four of his brother's assassins fired on him as he was riding through a skirt of woods near the Missouri and Kansas lines. Two of them fell before his unerring aim and the others escaped. Quantrell sprang from his horse and, rushing up to one of his dying enemies, was in the act of firing again when the poor fellow, hardly able to speak, whispered: "I know you. You are Quantrell. You have sworn to kill all who had a hand in the murder of your brother. Most of us have fallen by your hand. The others must soon follow. They cannot kill you, for you bear a charmed life. But it is all up with me and now that we are even, I ask your forgiveness. You need not ask for mine. There is no malice in my heart. I have repented my cruel treatment of you and your brother and I will soon be at rest. Forgive me, comrade, forgive me."

As he uttered these faint words, Quantrell states that he reached out his hand for greeting and forgiveness, but the recollections of the past came thronging upon him and he steeled his heart against effeminate demonstrations. He refused the proffered hand, saying: "No, I can never forgive you. You have desolated my life and made a very demon of an innocent lad. If in the next world you have any knowledge of this one, let it be forever imprinted on your

mind that wherever you are, you are unforgiven. Quantrell never forgives nor forgets."

The poor fellow turned his hungry eyes to his slayer and asked for a drink of water. Quantrell held his canteen to his lips. He drank greedily and deep—then a hemorrhage and all was over.

When we were rested up, we scouted through all the highways and byways of Southern Missouri and the destruction we wrought among the enemy was terrible in the extreme.

I confess I was never much of a tenderfoot, but some of the scenes through which I passed while under the leadership of Quantrell caused even me to pause and consider my career. But it was war, and you know what Sherman said about it.

You may be sure a great wail went up throughout the Northland because of desolated Lawrence, but never a damnation dissenting Puritan marred the platitude of his angular countenance by frowning on the atrocities that were daily being committed by Jennison, Lane and their bloody minions throughout the grief stricken portions of Missouri.

They smiled on Palmyra's butchery, but their saffron eyes turned piously to heaven and their plethoric hearts cried aloud for vengeance when Anderson's earthquake broke loose on Centralia and Quantrell's fury razed Lawrence to the ground. There's a difference without a distinction. It all depends on the point of view.

A few months following the Lawrence "atrocities" we were in the vicinity of Fort Webster, when Quantrell got news that Adjutant General Curtis would pass that way the next day with a band of musicians, troubadours, cooks, flunkies and other "Northern army accessories" on his way to Independence, and he forthwith made ready to take possession of the caravan. We came upon them about six miles from Fort Webster, and after a little skirmish, overpowered and captured them.

Curtis was literally scared out of his wits and piteously begged Quantrell to spare his life.

"Would you dare ask mercy of me?" asked Quantrell, as he took from his pocket a paper and, unfolding it, showed Curtis his own order to kill Quantrell's men wherever and

whenever they could be found. "Is not that your order?" shrieked Quantrell.

"I was forced to issue the order," whined the craven hearted wretch. "It was an order from headquarters."

"It is no such thing," said Quantrell. "Had it been from the Federal government it would have been so worded. This is your infamous work, Curtis, and you've got to answer to me for it right here and now. I am going to kill you, sir; and I advise you not to appear before your maker with a lie on your lips. Now, sir; is not this your original order?"

Curtis hung his head for a moment, as if in prayer, and seeing death was inevitable, he said, with a sigh: "Yes, it is my work."

"And you wanted it obeyed, of course?"

"Yes."

"Would you have practiced the doctrine you preached, had the opportunity offered?"

"Yes, such are the fortunes of war."

"And you expect mercy at my hands?"

"No, nothing but death."

He was not disappointed.

With Curtis and his band of merry-makers was a Mr. O'Neill, an artist on Leslie's Magazine. He had in his possession an unfinished picture of some hypothetical battle, in which were portrayed Rebels in full flight before the gallant boys in blue, who were mowing them down in merciless abundance with rifles, pistols, swords and bayonets. Oh, our boys in gray were certainly having a tough time in that "Battle Scene." Poor O'Neill. It was his own Waterloo he had so graphically portrayed for the edification of the foulest periodical of that day and generation.

But Leslie's was not cheated out of the picture. Quantrell sent it in with these memorable words written in his own bold hand:

"O'Neill's last contribution to Leslie's, sent in by Quantrell, with regrets that the artist's physical condition was such that he could not attend to the matter in person."

I have no doubt that the picture is now somewhere in the old junk heaps of this illustrious periodical, and I sincerely trust that Leslie's has, by this time, come to look on the South as a considerable part of the Federal government.

Poor troubadours, they had twanged the last chord for the merriment of Northern audiences. Poor cooks, they had baked their last pone of bread for camp or festal board. Poor soldiers, they had for the last time tented on the old camp ground. Poor Curtis, he had lost his head—one of his most valuable possessions—also a magnificent silk banner, presented him by the worthy ladies of Leavenworth, Kan.

In this engagement of the 150 men, including soldiers, minstrels, cooks and flunkies, they lost 150 men, while our losses, out of the 195 who went forth to battle, was two killed and about a dozen wounded.

For the rest of that year we preyed on the enemy's wagon trains and by this means kept ourselves well in food and raiment, but all along we were losing from one to half a dozen men in little skirmishes, as well as horses, and for this reason Quantrell called me in one bright spring morning to discuss the prospects of recruiting our commands in Kentucky.

I did not think well of the enterprise, and so advised my chieftain, but to all my negations he shut his ears and his reason, and announced his intention to start forthwith for the east. When I signified my willingness to go, he limbered up considerably and as nearly as I can recall his words, he harangued me about as follows:

"The jig is up, Kit. Federal troops in the South are as thick as fiddlers in purgatory. Fort Fisher has fallen and the South's gateway to the outside world is forever closed. Pemberton has surrendered Vicksburg, Banks has captured Fort Hudson and the trans-Mississippi department is cut off from the East. Faragut has the southern seaboard; Ben Butler is roosting like a buzzard in New Orleans, and it's only a matter of time, my boy, when Lee will have to hand over his blade to Lincoln's little bulldog, Grant, and all is over but the misery. To hold out longer is foolishness in the extreme. Lee is a great and a sensible man. He must realize that further resistance will be a cruel sacrifice of men. Had they only fought as we have fought the results would have been different and Lee's army would now be quartered in the Federal capitol. I foresee the end and it is a most pathetic one. In the terms of capitulation, the battling portion of the trans-Mississippi department will be

left out of the reckoning and we guerillas will be outlawed by the victors. We raised our oriflame on the western plains and the banner presented me on that memorable night by Miss Anderson will never trail in dust while I live. We will have to keep up the fight to the bitter end. A price will be placed on those ringlets of yours and your scalp will be appraised at a greater value than your whole body would bring now at public auction. I raised the black flag in all seriousness, and I will die under it. There is no other way. Make up your mind to the same enviable fate. I will not cringe and with suppliant knee beg mercy of those whom I have defied. I know how dangerous it is to go back into Kentucky, my boy, and there in all likelihood, I will be buried in her sacred soil. So, cheer up, and let's make ready for the long journey."

We went into Kentucky with about sixty men, and the names of many of them are familiar to the world.

It was as I had conjectured. The whole country east of the Mississippi river was swarming with blue coats, like green flies about the wound of a helpless lion.

There was not a day we did not have our passage challenged, not a foot of ground that was not disputed by the inexorable foe; but we journeyed on, day after day, week after week, and by our daring and cunning, managed to live at the enemy's expense, for we had no other means of livelihood.

The scraps, encounters, skirmishes and small battles we had on this memorable trip are entirely too numerous and uninteresting to mention, and for this reason I will pass them up.

After two months of continuous fighting we came at last to Wakefield Farm, in Spencer county, Kentucky, nestling like a happy retreat on the banks of the Red river. Here for the first time in many a day, we unsaddled our horses, tethered them on a grassy plot near a farm house, and got out our stale luncheons for the midday meal. How delightful it was to roll on the fresh young grass in the shade of the stately oaks. How exhilarating to sprawl out at full length and rest our tired bodies! How homelike and how far from the bitter strife we seemed to be!

We had been in this terrestrial paradise only an hour when

we heard the clatter of horse's feet far down the road, which was a most ominous forecast. Springing to our horses in an instant, we threw the saddles on their tired backs, but before we could mount the whole landscape was alive with soldiers and every avenue of escape cut off. Being very light and rather active, I was the first to mount and when the first bullets came singing their weird songs of death above our heads, I made a break for a weak looking place in the old worm fence, but before striking it, I turned to seek how it fared with my comrades, and just as I looked, Quantrell, in absolute indifference to his safety, was standing with his back to his horse, calmly and deliberately dropping his assailants in their tracks or from their horses. Rushing back to assist in the desperate game, I saw the gallant scout stagger and sink to the ground. The enemy was gradually closing in and it was a matter of only a few minutes when all would be over. I fired both revolvers in the face of the steadily but cautiously approaching enemy and had the grim satisfaction of seeing them stagger back. Several went down, but the others quickly recovered from the surprise of our furious attack, and notwithstanding our little band was dealing heavy blows to their ranks, they began again to close up the cordon, furiously fighting as the lines closed around.

Fighting as I moved backward, step by step, I stood at last over the body of my fallen cheftain. His horse throughout the battle had never moved, but stood in the midst of the terrible fire, unterrified. I bent over the fallen hero and tried to get him to let me help him mount, but with a faltering voice he said: "No, Kit. They've got me. 'Tis as well now as later. Go, save yourself. They've killed me, they can do no more. Go, I, your chief, command it. And God be with you. In another world, I'll be waiting for you."

It was best. I could do no good by remaining. The sacrifice of my own life would not stanch his wound or stay the icy hand of death. Bidding my chieftain a sorrowful farewell, I mounted my horse and with a determined rush, rammed the fence and made my escape to the sheltering woods. All the rest of the boys whose names are familiar to history made a safe getaway, as did, also, most of the command. In the fierce engagement we lost only seven men,

while I feel practically certain Quantrell dispatched at least that many of the enemy before he fell.

After the battle was over and the bloody field belonged to the brave foe, Quantrell was picked up by them and carried to a hospital in Louisville, where he lingered for two days in a semi-conscious state, then, rousing a little just before the end came, he made known his identity to the attending priest, received the sacrament and absolution, and died with his eyes fixed on that cross, which, to him, was the only means of salvation, for he was a most devout Catholic.

Dead, at last—Quantrell, the great general, the master mind, the human dynamo, the tender friend, the merciless enemy, and the embodiment of every principle that is grand, glorious and noble.

Death had come as he had often forecasted it, and he died as he had lived, under the black flag.

Had Quantrell lived in the days of Grecian mythology there would have been another Pegasus in the midst of the heaven spangled constellations, for his patron god would have transplanted him in the firmaments, where each night he could march triumphant through the heavens and view the scenes his genius had immortalized.

Sweet peace be his throughout all the long ages of eternity.

CHAPTER XIX.

MY TRIBUTE OF RESPECT TO THE CHIEFTIAN I LOVED.

As Quantrell had foretold, the end was near and came before the sluggish clod had settled on the pulseless heart that had made the world ring with its deeds of valor and feats of daring.

Unable longer to continue the unequal contest without a wanton and cruel sacrifice of heroes who had gone through fire and storm beneath the flaunting Stars and Bars, and who were yet willing to plunge into the seething fire of perdition for their chieftain's sake, the noble War Lord of the South, grand and glorious in the last act of the fearful drama, surrendered his tattered and half starved warriors to the inflexible, though magnanimous conqueror, and all was over.

The bloody hatchet was buried on the plains of Appomattox, and with it all our highest aims, all our fondest desires, all our glorious hopes of conquest, and all our dreams of a new republic, governed by Southern men. But ere the muffled drum's sad roll had beat the funeral dirge of a lost cause, the country was drenched in a saturnalia of blood, and the fertile fields and rocky defiles were strewn with the bleaching bones of conquered and conqueror in intermingling heaps throughout a prostrate land, gruesome monuments to man's mad passions and greedy avarice.

The roar of death dealing mortars no longer sounded from the hilltops, nor from the slumbering valleys the rattle of musketry. All was quiet at last, and over the fields of carnage, on sable pinions, soared the searching vulture, and if he could speak he would say: "Plant your batteries for the destruction of your brothers. I will watch your labors from the beetling crags. Form your lines of battle, I will survey them from my home in the clouds. Order the mad charge and strew the plains with the victims of your malice, I will pick their bones when the torrent of battle has swept over the bloody field, and I will perch upon the grinning skull that was once the power house of human genius, and flap my ghoulish wings over the putrid field where white bones

of murdered men lie bleaching in the sun. Let the conqueror rejoice in his victory and the hero in his deeds of valor. Let beauty reign for a season and perish, for where gladness is, sorrow will be. Where life and strength go forth in the fullness of vigor, age and decay will come. Where the bloody grapple has been and passed away and silence sit brooding over the deserted field, you will hear the flap of my pinions and see my hungry beak buried in the fruits of your bloody hands. Build your temple, they will decay. Rear new republics on the fields of fallen empires, they will perish, and the rivers run red with the blood of kingdom builders. I will watch your work from my azure heights and feed my body at last upon the heart of the conqueror."

So perished our hero, and the cause that called his body back to earth that gave, and the Lament of Alpine is the wail of my soul:

"Thou wert swift, *O Quantrell*,
As a roe on the hill;
Terrible as a meteor of fire.
Thy wrath was as the storm;
Thy sword in battle as lightning on the field.
Thy voice was like a stream after rain,
Like thunder on a distant hill.
Many fell by thy arm.
They were consumed in the flames of thy wrath.
But when thou didst return from war
How peaceful was thy brow!
Thy face was like the sun after rain,
Like the moon in the silent night,
Calm as the breast of the lake
When the loud wind is hushed into repose.
Narrow is thy dwelling now,
Dark the place of thine abode.
With three steps I compass thy grave,
O thou, who wast so mighty before!
Two stones with their heads of moss
Are the only memorials of thee.
A tree with scarce a leaf,
Long grass whistling in the wind,

Mark to the *passer-by*
The grave of the *gallant Quantrell*.
"Quantrell, thou art low indeed.
Thou hast no mother to mourn thee,
No maid with tears of love.
Dead is she that brought thee forth,
Fallen are thy comrades in arms.
Who on his staff is this?
Who this, whose head is white with age,
Whose eyes are galled with tears,
Who quakes at every step?
It is thy *comrade, O Chieftain,*
Weeping above thy lowly bier.
But thou hearest me not.
Deep is the sleep of the dead,
Low their pillow of dust.
When shall it be morn in the grave
To bid the slumberer awaken?
Farewell, thou bravest of men,
Thou conquerer of the *plains*;
But the plains shall see thee no more,
Nor the gloomy wood be lighted
With the splendor of thy steel.
Thou hast left no son
But song shall preserve thy name."

Thus ended a life in which the whole South had an interest, and thus ended the first epoch of my civil and military life.

BOOK TWO.

CHAPTER I.

THE SECOND AND MOST EVENTFUL PERIOD IN MY STORMY LIFE, AND THE CAUSES THAT SNATCHED ME FROM THE PLOW HANDLES AND HURLED ME ONCE MORE INTO THE OPEN ARMS OF MY OLD COMRADES.

I will not tarry long on the threshold of the second epoch in my life, for it would be but a rehash of what has often been told of the most desperate men the world has ever known.

I have already related the Blaylock incident, which was the prime cause of my becoming a guerilla. I will now acquaint you with the causes which robbed agriculture of a shining star and transplanted that star in western skies, a garnet satellite in the midst of a constellation as red as Antares in the Heart of the Scorpion.

What specific reason the other boys had for turning outlaw, I will leave for them to mention, if they choose, or remain silent as they have remained for forty years; but this I do know, they were declared outlaws by the Federal government while they were but patriotic soldiers. They had ample justification for becoming guerillas, and I dare say good reasons for the reckless lives they led for seventeen long and storm years. Let them speak for themselves. They have not asked me to defend them. The few survivors of us, Frank James, Cole Younger and myself, and another man whose name I am not at liberty to mention, are still bound by our fraternal oath. We have been friends throughout the most stormy period of American history. I love the memory of my comrades, living and dead; and I would no more think of desecrating the dead than I would of dishonoring the living.

In this second book I shall give an account of my career as an outlaw and shall mention my companions in such manner as will cause the least possible embarrassment.

In many instances I will have to ask the reader to read between the lines, which he can readily do if he has an

atom of imagination. True, we have made friends with the Federal government and received absolution from all the crimes which were registered against us on sundry dockets throughout the land, but there are some things the Federal government does not officially know and, consequently, has had no jurisdiction over.

I will mention the bold exploits of myself and comrades, and along with them, others which have been accredited to us, but whether justly or unjustly, I leave to the analytical and deductive reasoning of the reader.

It is a well known fact that on many an occasion we committed acts of violence, which, without a modicum of justification, would shame a polar bear.

But then, what else could we do? A man who is not permitted to live under laws that govern other men must of necessity draft his own code of laws and govern his life according to their ethics.

I think it was Blackstone who said: "Law is a rule of action and that there are two kinds of law—*lex scripta* and *lex non scripta*," or, in plain English, the written and unwritten. If, therefore, there are two kinds and both of them are admissible in trials by jury, and the Federal government operates under the former, why not let us utilize the latter, lest, from eternal disuse, it become obsolete.

But this is a mere badinage.

Suffice it to say the government had made of citizens, capable of better things, outlaws in every sense the term may be applied. She had literally gone in the manufacturing business and the fruits of her loom were officially degraded men, condemned to the fellowship of felons.

I was a guerilla, not an outlaw; a citizen, not an alien; a soldier, and not a low browed bomb-throwing anarchist. My soul was susceptible of all the tender emotions and mad passions that stirred other men's breasts. I was a human being and possessed of all the fond hopes, all the laudable aspirations, and all the lofty aims that fired other men's souls with patriotic ardor and love of home and country. But, alas, I had no country. My country fell bleeding on the gory field of Gettysburg, in the valley of the Shenandoah, around Richmond, at Vicksburg, New Orleans and the plains of the West.

The Confederacy was dead, the requiem had been chanted, the ritual read, the dirge sung, and the Orison of the good and true fell back from the portals of heaven unanswered. The last sad rites had been performed over her pulseless heart and the funeral cortege moved sadly and slowly from Appomattox.

The lurid glare of the torch had been quenched in her heart's blood, a black pall hung over the land and the white ceremonies of the dead were her flag of truce.

The flashing sabre no longer dazzled the senses of impulsive youth, but were hung above the doors, grim trophies of a season of terror, gone from the earth forever.

A new era had dawned and sturdy men set about to adjust their lives to new conditions and to reclaim from the briars and weeds the homes that had gone to waste.

The widowed mother, no longer hopeful of pressing her consort to her bosom again, arrayed herself in the sable folds of despair and with her puny strength attempted to repair her shattered fortunes and to reclaim from the wrecks and ravages of war the derelicts of hopes floating on the ocean of ruin. The orphaned child sought refuge in desolated homes and the young wife grew her flower garden above the pulseless heart of her lover and watered them with her tears.

The songs of gladness and hopeful prayers were drowned in the bitter wails of anguish and the crooning of the old black mammy gave place to the riotous revels of a new race of beings.

I, too, had melancholy dreamings and dark forebodings. I had exhausted my strength in the conquest of my ultimate conqueror and was ready to surrender and eager to adjust my life to the new order of things. My chieftain was dead and most of my comrades were in the dim land of shadows. How I envied the lucky boys who said to the Federal government: "I am whipped, appoint me to my place of servitude along with my people and my neighbors." But, alas, I was henceforth to be an Ishmael of the plains till that lucky day should arrive when the enemy would forgive and forget. Henceforth I had no country, no flag and no home. But despite these gloomy reflections, I resolved to return to my mother's home and there set all my energies to work in

the matter of reconstruction and rehabilitation. The dear old home of my childhood had been destroyed in '63 by the infamous vandals cloaked under the cowl of "The Home Guard." The outhouses, stables and barns had all perished in the withering breath of the enemy's torch, leaving my defenseless old mother without shelter, save an old tobacco barn that was scarce worth the trouble of firing.

To this old barn my mother took her small effects and there, on the naked ground for a floor, she lived on, happy in the thought that some day her wandering boy would return and prepare a home for her old age.

I was in Clarksville, Tenn., when I heard of the surrender, and despite the fact that a price was placed on the heads of all guerillas, I determined to go to my mother and devote my life to the care and comfort of her remaining days. With these thoughts in mind, I went back into Kentucky and bent every energy towards setting things in order and reclaiming the old home from the new grown jungle. It was about the first of May when I rode up to the old barn and received the warm embrace and hearty welcome of a dear old mother.

Being rather active, both in mind and body, I went to work with a vim, and soon the furrowed fields bespoke my presence.

For several days I toiled on, and ever fearful of some impecunious jayhawker betraying my presence to the Federal authorities, I carried a pistol, given me by Jesse James, to the field with me and kept the holster strapped to my plow handles. This pistol had carved on the barrel in rude letters the names of Jesse James and Kit Dalton. It was a dangerous inscription, I will admit, but had I only been left to pursue the even tenor of my way and lead a quiet, humble life, that fatal gun would have remained an innocent trophy of bygone days in my modest home to this day. But my evil star arose and fast climbed up into the zenith of my manhood.

One day I told my mother that the mule colt, which was the only animal left her by the conquering enemy, was big enough to earn his daily bread by the sweat of his flanks, and that I was going to Newstead to get a set of plow gear for him. With this I rode into the little village of New-

stead, but before I had reached my destination I was met by Mr. Frank Mitchell, a life-long friend of our family, who, after expressing his surprise and delight at seeing me, inquired my mission to the village. I told him, and after a moment's hesitation he said: "Curly, it won't do for you to go up town. Ned and John Morris and Dick Ferguson are upon the streets and are drinking heavily. They heard that you were back in the settlement and claim that it was your command who had killed their fathers (who were of the notorious Home Guard), and say they are going to kill you on sight."

"Well, Mr. Mitchell," I replied, "that's a game where more than one side can play. I now want to live the quiet life of a peaceable citizen, and it is my purpose to do so if possible. But I came for the gear, and I guess I'll not return without it, but I'll take pains not to meet up with those drunken rowdies. You need have no fear of their attacking me in the open. If they are determined to kill me it will be done at night or from cover."

"Now, Curly," replied Mr. Mitchell, laying his hand on my shoulder; "you stay here and I'll bring your plow gear to you. Don't go up town, for trouble will be sure to follow, and this country has had enough to do it the rest of its days. Just you stay here and I'll be back in a few minutes with the gear."

Seeing the wisdom of his admonition, I remained in a little shack at the entrance to the village and awaited his return.

In a few minutes I heard a yelling and the firing of pistols, and when Mr. Mitchell returned he told me it was the boys who had sworn to kill me on sight. They had gotten pretty well "organized" at the saloon and were leaving the town with whoops and yells and firing pistols to intimidate the marshal.

Mr. Mitchell helped me anchor the gear to my horse's neck, and bidding me be cautious, stood there and waited till he saw me disappear in the gathering twilight.

As the rowdies had left the town in an opposite direction I had no fear of meeting them that evening, so I rode on leisurely towards home, the trace chains jingling from my horse's neck at every step.

Near the village of Newstead is a high pike which had been thrown up many years ago as a road to cross the boggy lowlands. On either side of the road, a wilderness reared its lofty head of forest trees, following the road to the open fields beyond.

Twilight was fading into darkness when I hit this road, and from the towering treetops the melancholy owl called to his drowsy mate, and the night hawks hid in the darkest jungles screamed out their delight at approaching darkness. Then all the night-sound broke loose in chorus, which was accentuated by the bellowing of bullfrogs in the stagnant pools beside the road and by the far-off scream of a prowling panther. It was the voice of the wild and the songs they were singing was the melody of the jungleland. All unsuspecting, I rode along pensive and slow, listening to the discordant notes as they began to soften into forest melody, when all of a sudden and without warning, three streams of fire flashed out from the jungle and three leaden missiles sung harmlessly past me. Realizing at once the dangers that threatened me, I wheeled to the other side of my horse, and clinging to the saddle Indian fashion, a feat I had learned of the Red Brother in the West, I urged him on amid a shower of bullets that came whistling along by my side.

It being now almost dark, I calculated that my would-be assassins might have taken my equestrian feat for a death wound and come up the steep embankment to put the finishing touches to my prostrate body in the event they found it there.

My sympathetic nature always revolted at disappointing a friend under any unavoidable circumstances, and as this sore disappointment could be avoided, I determined to go back and let the poor fellows find me and gloat over my dead body—if they could. Wherefore, I ran on about two hundred yards from where the shooting occurred, hitched my horse and slipping to the opposite side of the embankment, crept along under the sheltering walls until I thought I was about opposite to where I had left my assailants, then cautiously crept up the embankment till, unseen myself, I could see how it fared with my old friends and neighbors. I was not in my place of hiding more than half a minute

before I heard them talking on their side of the breastworks. I had not miscalculated the spot more than a yard and there I lay awaiting developments. Pretty soon I saw through the gathering gloom the dim outlines of a flop hat creeping up the bank. "Oh, I know we drapped him!" It was the voice of Ned. "If he hain't dead," said John, "we'll finish him up and go threw him. I know the little kinky headed devil's pockets are full of rocks, and they'll come in right handy now."

"Find your hornets' nest before you rob it," came the warning voice of Ferguson. By this time the three were in the middle of the road, scurrying about in search of my dead body. "Here I am, boys," I said, and turned loose my two trusty dogs of war. At the first two shots Dick and John fell and Ned wheeled to run just as I cracked down on him. "Oh, Lordy," I heard him say, and then followed a terrible crash in the briars.

After the sharp and incisive little battle was over, I walked upon the levee and picked up two pistols which were meant as the agencies of my destruction. Having examined them closely, I threw one into a slough, and the other being a very handsome pearl-handled gun, I appropriated it.

Hurrying on home, I told mother what had happened, threw off the gear, and bidding her farewell, quit that section, and passing by my uncle's house, told him the exact truth of the whole miserable business. Then I asked him to get up some of his friends and go to the scene, where in all likelihood they would find three horses hitched, which would prove the conspiracy and attempted assassination.

"I don't doubt that you were justified, my boy," said my uncle, "but this country is under military rule now and no one allowed to carry arms but the coldest blooded murderers. There is no way under heaven for you to justify your acts in the sight of the militia. Those boys belonged to the other side, at least their fathers did, and they are therefore privileged to do all the devilment they want to. The only thing for you to do is to go into hiding somewhere and when conditions improve, I will get word to you somehow and you can come on back home."

Then handing me a bill, he gave me his blessings, after

the manner of the ancients, and I left him, never to see the dear old soul again.

When midnight came, my uncle and a dozen other reputable men were at the place of the late tragedy, where they built up a roaring fire that lighted the road and woods far around and picked up the bodies of the two who were in the road and soon found the other one a few yards away, in the direction of the horses.

The horses were located and the blazing fire showed where the cowardly rascals had cleared out the overhanging limbs so that nothing could arrest the bullets that were intended for my heart.

When the first gray streaks of dawn began to throw a hazy film over the eastern hills, I was across the border into Tennessee, headed south for Mississippi.

In due time I arrived in Saltillo, Mississippi, a little station on the M. & O. Railroad, and having located a cousin by the name of J. B. Dalton, hurried on to his home several miles out from the town.

I quickly made J. B. acquainted with my condition and offered to serve as his hired man and went by the name of Tom Henderson. For several weeks I put in good time behind the plow handles and was happy in the thought that I could make myself useful to the man who so hospitably gave me shelter.

I was earning my bread in the sweat of my face, the happiest condition in which a human being can be placed.

J. B. was pleased with my services and paid me liberally and we were as nearly happy as southerners could be in those awful days when the bread winner was the serf and the parasite the lords of creation. But, like the wandering Jew, there was no resting place for me. It seemed that all nature had conspired against me.

"So wills the fierce avenging sprite, till blood for blood atones.

Aye, though he be hidden in a cave and trodden down with stones,

And years have rotted off his flesh, the world shall see his bones."

I had been working about five weeks when a heavy rain came up which stopped the plowing and gave me an opportunity to go to town for some cheap clothing, for I was sadly in need of them.

Making a small draft on my cousin, I saddled up my horse, and getting myself inside a great rain coat that was capable of sheltering three or four men of my size, I struck out for Saltillo, which town was then in the hands of Federal troops, who ruled the country with a rod of iron and lived off the fat of the land.

Now, here's where my unlucky star burst from behind the clouds once more and in its lurid glare, I saw a long troubled career ahead of me.

When I reached the little village, I rode up to the hitch rack, threw my reins over a peg and, attempting to dismount, found that the clumsy rain coat had gotten caught between the saddle and blanket, and when I attempted to pull it out, my right hip pocket came into full view of some soldiers who were then sheltered on a store gallery from the rain. I quickly disentangled my coat and walked upon the very gallery where the soldiers were. When I stepped up and saluted, a young lieutenant said, "Good morning, young man, that's a right vicious looking gun you are carrying."

I saw the jig was up and determined to show a bold front, notwithstanding. "Yes," I said, "it's a first rate gun," and with this, I pulled it out of my pocket so all could view it from a distance and then quietly replaced it.

"By what authority are you carrying such a pistol?" asked the lieutenant curtly.

"Do you think I would dare carry one without warrant?" I asked.

"I say, what is your authority?" demanded the young man a little petulantly.

"On as good authority, sir, as you wear that uniform," I answered rather curt.

"I demand to see your authority," he persisted.

Here, for the first time in life, I was completely at sea. I had no authority save my own will and that was about all I felt that I needed. I tried to think my way out, but my brain seemed numbed and my wits gone to sleep. I could not shake them into action and every minute was rendering

my position more and more precarious. Finally, inspiration struck me and I said with a smile, "I am a deputy United States marshal and am here to summons witnesses to the Federal court" (which I chanced to know was then in session at Oxford).

"Would you kindly show your papers?" asked the persistent fellow.

"Gladly, sir," I replied, with a frown in my heart and a smile on my lips. "They are in my saddle bags. I will bring them to you instantly." Saying this, I stepped nimbly off the gallery and started to my horse, when I heard that nagging voice again, "Hold on a minute, young man; not so swift, if you please. Just wait a second and I'll go with you."

"Oh!" said I, good humoredly, "you think possibly I may not have them and will attempt to escape! Is that it?"

"You've hit the nail square on the head, young fellow, that's just exactly what I mean. You see, I can't take the chances."

"But don't you consider you are taking desperate chances every day?" I asked.

"Desperate chances with what, with who, and why?"

"Oh, with every body; me, for instance. I am no fledgeling, myself. I've smelt burnt powder at close range. You don't know but what I am a member of Quantrell's band, and you know they were fierce fighters. For what you know, I may be—

"I don't give a durn if you are that little hell hound, Kit Dalton himself, I am going to see your credentials just the same. Hook 'em out."

"But in the event I fail to produce them, then what?"

"You will have to hand over that gun and submit to arrest."

"You surely would not be so hard as that, would you, lieutenant? That gun is a present and I value it too highly to part with on any account, for it is a present from Jesse James to Kit Dalton. Throw up your hands!" As soon as the words were out of my mouth the pistol was in his face, but unmindful of danger, he reached for his own gun and had it out of his pocket when I cracked down and shot his

right arm nearly off. He spun round like a top, then pitched headlong to the ground. The next second I was on my horse and hurrying away at the top of his speed, while the entire garrison followed close on my heels for about three miles, and in the chase I think I make a conservative estimate when I state that no less than a thousand harmless shots were discharged at me.

Seeing how badly I was outdistancing them, they gave up the chase and returned to the barracks.

It was a pity to have to shoot the young fellow, but it was my only chance of escape, for had they taken me in and read the inscription on that fatal pistol, all the trickery that law is capable of could not have saved me. I did not want to kill him; furthermore, I didn't. My sole purpose was to disable him so I could make my escape.

Poor fellow, he wore an empty sleeve the rest of his days and fed regularly at the public trough. If the gentleman is living today, he is a man about my own age and it is all his own fault that he wears that empty sleeve. Now, I am willing to admit that this is a very awkward manner in which to go through life, but I have never learned to value any man's arm as much as my own neck.

Taking a circuitous route to throw the enemy off of my trail, in the event they desired to have further communication with me, I came at last to J. B. Dalton's home and told him my luckless adventure.

"It is nothing more than I should have expected," said he, "for a billy goat cannot enter Saltillo without being subjected to the humiliation of a search. There seems no safe place for you anywhere, Kit; certainly none east of the Mississippi river, and it is my advice for you to hit it out west as fast as your horse can carry you. It won't be safe for you to stay in my house tonight. You go over to Bob Jackson's and spend the night, while I ride to Baldwin and get you some money. You can't take such a trip without money, unless you resort to shady methods, and this I don't want you to do."

Saying this, he hurried on to Baldwin, some twelve miles distant from his home, and returned about 2 o'clock in the morning with fifty dollars, which he gave me most freely

and cheerfully, and which I will here take occasion to state, was no bad investment, for Kit Dalton never forgets a friend.

I did not spend the night with Mr. Jackson, but remained in the woods till I heard J. B. ride up, then taking his princely offering, I struck out for the west.

Now what? Would I find any of my old comrades on the old stamping ground? Would the government permit them to live in the land they had drenched with the blood of *patriots*? It was not at all likely, and yet, they had many friends in the settlement, whose doors were ever open to them, despite the fact that an order had gone forth that any one who harbored any of the late Quantrell's men would be treated as felons.



CAPT. KIT DALTON

As an Outlaw and Texas Ranger. Age 33 Years.

CHAPTER II.

WESTWARD AGAIN. TRIP THROUGH MISSISSIPPI. PLEASING STOP AT OXFORD. MEETING A JOLLY BUNCH OF MISSISSIPPI BOYS AT BATESVILLE. CROSSED THE RIVER AT AUSTIN. BECAME A CATTLE PUNCHER.

Towards our Western Mecca I turned my face once more. I passed through Saltillo in the dead of night and rode within a hundred yards of the Federal camp. No one challenged me and I passed the town in perfect safety, and after a long ride through the wilds of an undeveloped country came at last to Oxford. While there, I mingled pleasantly with the people, visited the Federal court and was soon in friendly conversation with a deputy United States marshal, who, as a matter of course, was one of Uncle Sam's proteges. I found him very companionable, though, notwithstanding the fact that he was considerably puffed with pride because of his position. To allay any suspicions he might harbor concerning itinerary gentlemen, I asked him for a job on the force. He said it was possible for him to give me some work tomorrow if I would report to him at 8 o'clock the next morning.

But I didn't stay for the job. Leaving Oxford in the afternoon, I journeyed on west, and passed through Batesville, where I found a lot of the boys engaged in target practice with pistols.

There were about twenty-five in the bunch, and every man had put a dollar in the kitty for the lucky man.

One young fellow had had his inning, and out of his ten shots had broken eight pint bottles at a distance of twenty steps. I had just finished my dinner, which consisted of a box of cheap sardines and stale crackers, and when about half the boys had shot their turn, I asked permission to chuck my plunk in the kitty, which was readily agreed to, as one of the boys already had a fine record and another of the good shots was yet on the waiting list.

As I was the last man to enter, I would be the last man to shoot. All were done now. Two of the boys had tied,

making eight each. Taking from my pocket the gun that had gotten me into trouble in Saltillo, I fired and missed, at which there went up a rousing though good natured laugh. Again I shot, and shattered the bottle, and kept this up for all the succeeding shots. With cheers and congratulations, the money was handed over—twenty-six silver dollars.

Then, of course, the victor had to set 'em up, which I did most cheerfully, at the handsome lay-out of about six dollars. Every man took a box of cove oysters.

This was the jolliest crowd I had struck in many a day and when I bade them good-bye two hours later, it was with a warm and cordial handshake all round, each man pressing me to come to see him if I was ever in the settlement again.

In Batesville I passed off as a western cattleman, and as I could talk pretty intelligently about this section of the country, they had no occasion to doubt my statements.

How lucky for those whole-souled boys that the Federal government did not have a garrison there! Or possibly it was lucky for the government, for I think they were the kind of boys who would not permit a small thing like the Federal government to interfere with their actions. Leaving Oxford, I went on to Austin, then the county site of Tunica county, I think. I am told there is no vestige of the village left, though whether this be true or not, I don't know.

Crossing the Mississippi river in the good old-fashioned way, I pushed on to Pine Bluff, thence to Little Rock—all the time camping wherever night overtook me.

A day's journey from Little Rock I fell in with a cattleman who was taking about four thousand head of cattle to the feeding grounds in Kansas, and as that was my destination, I asked for a job. It did not take me long to convince the owner that he needed my services, for many dangers beset the way and I was pretty well acquainted with every foot of the long route.

My pay was to be forty-five dollars when we reached Ft. Scott, which was a most lucky pick-up, as it gave me company all the way, defrayed my expenses and handsomely provided for my exchequer.

It looked like I was on the high road to success at last. In the long, long march across the plains I had heard nothing more thrilling than the crack of whips and the bleating of cattle. Not a gun had been fired for any reason whatsoever. How soothing the sensation, how peaceful appeared the broad extended prairie! It was like a paradise to me, and I wished it could endure always.

When I reached Ft. Scott and was paid off, I had the princely sum of one hundred and ten dollars—all good honest money, and with such wealth as this, felt equal to almost any business enterprise. I put up at the best hotel, had my horse stalled at the best livery stable, and in every way conducted myself like a man of affairs. I never shall forget my first night in Ft. Scott, for I had a little experience there I had never heard of before.

Passing along an unfrequented part of the streets, I saw a typical three card monte man in conversation with a gentleman of decidedly clerical bearing. His long Jim Swinger, his high collar and his lean lank form all told his profession.

The monte man was telling him how he had been swindled out of a drove of cattle by a shark with a little trick at cards. It was this way, he said, "The guy had tree kyerds like these," and he threw out three business cards, the backs of which were exactly alike, then he flirted them around and said, "You see, one's got 'Union Pacific Railroad' on it, the other, 'Fort Exchange' and the other, 'Dr. Browne, Dentist.' The sharper turned the kyerds over like this and says, 'I bet you five dollars you can't pick out the kyerd with 'Union Pacific' on it.' Like a muttonhead I put up the five and flipped over the right kyerd. He handed over the five, then he wanted to bet me I couldn't do it again. Well, I lost ten dollars this time, then I lost my head, and pretty soon, all the money I had."

"You were certainly foolish to bet on another man's trick," said his reverence, then added, "Don't you know it is a sin to bet? Why, that is one of the simplest tricks I have ever heard of to swindle a man out of his money. Why, I could pick out the right card every time."

"That's what I thought, parson, and it got me in trouble."

"Well, you don't deserve any better. A man who could

lose on such a simple trick as that doesn't deserve much sympathy."

"I don't know, parson, it ain't so easy as it looks. Now let me throw and see if you can spot 'Dr. Browne, Dentist.' " He threw and his holiness said, "Why, certainly I can, this is the one," and he turned up the right card.

"Well, you done it that time, parson, but as poor as I am, I'll bet you five dollars you can't do it again."

"I'm not a gambler," said the preacher, "I'm a minister of the gospel, but just to teach you some sense, I'm going to make the bet."

How I did itch to advise the reverend gentleman against his foolhardy course, then the thought came to me, "You are doing pretty well, Kit, attending to your own affairs. Keep your nose out of other people's business," and I held my peace and awaited results.

Down went the cards in a whirlwind of gyrations. "Now which one's got Dr. Browne, Dentist, on it?" asked the monte man.

"Why, this one, of course," said his worship as he flipped over the wrong card. The clergyman saw at once that he had been the victim of a bunco game and his countenance was something sad to look upon. With a deep groan, he walked away, mopping the cold perspiration from his brow. I joined him a few minutes later and expressed my surprise that he should be so easily taken in. "I see it now, young man, see the whole sinful act, and oh, what a fool I was to risk my last dollar!" Then he mopped the perspiration again from his ministerial countenance and groaned. "Forty miles from home and not a cent in my pockets nor a friend in the town. Oh what would my congregation think of me if they only knew, if they only knew?" Then he wept.

This was more than my rash nature could stand. Taking the minister by the arm, I said, "Come on back, parson, and I'll make him pungle up the last cent of it. It's simply an outrage, that's what it is."

"No," he said, reflectively, "that would never do. It would cause a scene. My name would get in the papers and I would be ruined with my precious flock. Let it go, let it go. I can walk home, though I have a sprained knee and

my shoes are not very comfortable. It serves me right and will be a dearly bought lesson, and let it also be a lesson to you, young man; never bet on another fellow's trick."

"But you say you are penniless," said I, sympathetically.

"Yes, not a cent in my pockets, not a friend in town and forty miles from my charge. But it doesn't matter, the Lord will provide, the Lord will provide."

As hardened a sinner as I was, this pathetic scene touched me most tenderly, and to set my conscience right with myself, I said, "Here, parson, I'll stake you. Take this from a man who pities your unfortunate condition. I freely give it and it is honest, hard earned money."

"Oh, I cannot, moaned the poor fellow. I may never see you again in all the world to pay it back again."

"I want no pay, parson. It is a gift. Take it and feel welcome."

"I know I should not impose on such good nature," whimpered the reverend, but what else can I do?" And his hand came sliding through the air in my direction and quickly closed over the bill.

"From the bottom of my heart, I thank you, young man, and wherever you go and whoever you are, be comforted with the thoughts that I am ever praying for you."

Then we parted company, and when I rejoined my employer at the hotel an hour later, I related the whole transaction to him, and to my astonishment he gave a war whoop, and calling a dozen or more of his friends about him, told how the clerical looking bunco man had bounced me.

Well, for a while I was mad enough to hunt out both those swindlers and at the point of my gun relieve them of every cent they had. But I soon thought better of the matter and in a little while was in a good enough humor to join the boys in their hilarity at my own expense. * * * The next day I was talking to the liveryman where my horse was quartered, and having aired my views concerning horses, he was favorably enough impressed with my knowledge of horse flesh to offer me a place with him, where I would act as buyer at seventy-five dollars a month.

After we had about come to an understanding, following western style, he said, "Come Henderson, lets have a drink," and despite my protests (for I never took a drink over the

bar in all my life) he led me on, captive, to the Fort Exchange, where he took a whiskey straight and I a lemonade. While we were seated at a table sipping our beverages, a typical Kansas Red Leg came in, ordered a whiskey straight, and having thrown it down his long goozel, I heard him remark to the bartender as he filled his glass the second time, "That little chap at the table over thar is one of Quantrell's cut throats. He chased me across the Kaw at the Lawrence (Kansas) massacree. They can't be no mistake about it."

The hounds of bad luck had struck my trail again. Would he never grow weary of the never ending chase? Was there no place beneath the shining sun where I could move among my fellows and feel safe from the cold nose of the never-tiring monster?

There was but one thing for me to do and that was to quit the town, for there was no telling what harm could come to me from this miserable wretch, who had evidently made up his mind to have the cohorts of Federal law upon me.

Quitting Fort Scott, I hurried on into Missouri, where I hoped to meet up with some of the old boys, who might be able to show me how to hide my identity.

CHAPTER III.

THE RUSSELVILLE BANK ROBBERY.

I feel a warrantable hesitance in referring to this deplorable affair, and would leave it out of the records but for the fact that I am in a position to exonerate the principal accused parties.

The Nashville Banner, under date March 22d, 1868, gave it out to the world that this was the work of Frank and Jesse James, Cole and Bob Younger et als., and the only truth in the accusation is with reference to the aforesaid et als. They were the parties, but just who these et als. were is something that has puzzled the authorities for many years.

I have it on the authority of one of the participants in this escapade that neither of the above mentioned gentlemen was there and I would not hesitate to give bond for the accuracy of the statement.

I do not doubt that Ol Shepherd was of the number who did the robbing and I feel reasonably sure Fletch Taylor, Dick Little, Bill Houghston and Bill Redmon were his associates. For all the authorities know, I may have been one of the number, but that's neither here nor there. History does not mention my name as one of the bunch, while it unhesitatingly declares the planning and execution was the work of "The Grand Old Masters." It would be a matter of impossibility to make anyone who had any knowledge of the James or Younger boys believe any of them were connected with the affair in any manner.

Mr. Long, the president of the bank, was shot. Mr. Long was unarmed. Cole Younger never shot an unarmed man in his life.

Mr. Long was a close personal friend of the Reverend Mr. James, father of Frank and Jesse. There was not enough money in the whole state of Kentucky to induce either Frank or Jesse to do violence to anyone who was a friend to their father, or to anyone who had ever done the old gentleman the slightest kindness. In addition to this, Jesse, at the time of the robbery, was in the home of a friend suffering from the effects of a serious wound received in some

western exploit, and Frank was constantly with him, ministering to his comfort.

Being closely associated with Frank, Jesse and Cole, and knowing how keenly they felt the sting of this unjust accusation and being in a position to justify them, it is one of the greatest pleasures I have experienced in the preparation of this little history to state positively to the world that these gentlemen had no knowledge of the Russelville episode until they read the accusing account in the paper above referred to. With this little explanation, I now give an account of the robbery as per the Nashville Banner of the 22d of March in the year 1868. This great paper most likely has a paper on its files of this date. If I misquote, the present management has redress on me.

"About ten days ago a man calling himself Colburn and claiming to be a cattle dealer offered to sell Mr. Long (president of the bank) a 7-30 note of the denomination of five hundred dollars (whatever that may mean). As none of the coupons had been cut off and the stranger, who claimed to be from Louisville, where the notes were worth a premium, offered it at par and allowed interest, Mr. Long became suspicious and refused to take it. On the 18th he returned again and asked Mr. Long to change him a \$100 bill. He was accompanied by a man with forbidding aspect and, suspecting the bill to be counterfeit, Mr. Long refused to change it. On the 20th, as Mr. Long and Mr. Barclay, clerk in the bank, and Mr. T. H. Simmons, a farmer living near Russelville, were sitting behind the counter, Colburn and another man rode to the front door, hitched their horses and entered the bank, three companions remaining outside. They asked for change for a fifty-dollar note. Mr. Long pronounced it counterfeit (what a stubborn fellow Mr. Long must have been), but was about making a more careful examination when Colburn drew a revolver, placed its muzzle against his head and cried out, "Surrender." Mr. Long wheeled around and sprang toward the door leading into a room in the rear of the banking office. He hoped thus to make his exit from the building and give the alarm. He, however, was anticipated by one of the robbers, who intercepted him at the door already mentioned, placed a pistol within six inches of his head

(they measured it with a rule, no doubt) and fired without uttering a word." (Now, either Mr. Long had a very hard head, or the outlaw had a very inferior pistol, and our boys carried no such weapons.)

The paper goes on to state just how the whole thing was pulled off, how Mr. Colburn (whom they claim was Cole Younger) and Mr. Long grappled, and how Mr. Long succeeded in making his escape and gave the alarm.

Then the paper goes into the minutest details and tells how everything was done, how much money was secured and how the bandits got away.

To quote further from this paper: "Detective Bligh, of Louisville, was called into the case and followed the trail way to the south seventy-five miles, where it suddenly vanished." All trails did likewise. It was one of the peculiar habits of trails in those days. They suddenly vanished as by magic. Possibly the outlaws climbed trees and pulled the trees up after them. That's said to be one of the most reliable ways of bringing a trail to a sudden and abrupt ending.

"Bligh and another officer named William Gallagher (supposed to be the same gent who made the name famous in the phrase, let her go Galliger), and some Nelson county people raided the home of Shepherd, who was living in Nelson county. George surrendered after a fight, seeing he had no chance of escape. He was taken to Logan county, tried and convicted and served three years in the penitentiary."

It is well known that Ol Shepherd, a cousin of George, was in the settlement at that time, but as soon as George was arrested, struck out for the west with two or three comrades. Soon afterward in resisting arrest, Ol was killed. Now, one of the historians plainly puts it this way: "It was plainly shown that Jesse James was at his hotel in Nelson county when the robbery occurred, and a little further on states blandly that the robbery was the work of Cole and Jim Younger, Jesse and Frank James, George and Ol Shepherd. Cole and Jim were not there. Neither were Frank and Jesse, but George and Ol Shepherd must have been since one of them was killed resisting arrest for this crime, while the other served a term in the pen.

I know whereof I speak and can state positively that no living man knows more about this miserable affair than I do. If I could be arrested for what I know, it would certainly fare hard with me.

I will state here that I have never seen George or Ol Shepherd since the commission of this crime. Ol was killed shortly afterwards, as related above, and George never crossed my path again. * * *

While the men hunters were busy in Logan county (my old home) I was in Hickman county, the guest of an old guerilla friend by the name of Charles Fox. While I was Fox's guest he and I went down to the southern part of the county to visit his aunt. Here we secured positions in a shingle mill in one of those old-fashioned plants where shingles were sliced instead of sawed, as they are today. The wages were up to the schedule in those parts and we were well satisfied to hang on to our jobs for the remainder of the year and would have done so but for the tragic death of my friend, which came about in this manner:

There lived only a few miles from Fox's aunt a Mrs. Ward, who had a son by the name of Billy, who was a particular friend of Fox.

One night I left Fox to stay with the Davis boys, who lived not far away, and while there a tragedy was being enacted in the home of Mrs. Cottrell, Fox's aunt, the news of which did not reach me till daylight the next morning.

I have the circumstances as related by Billy Ward himself, a youth of good morals and sober habits.

At midnight six masked men rode up to the home of Mrs. Ward and called for Billy. All unsuspecting, the young man came to the front door to see what was wanted and was instantly covered with two heavy pistols; then in the twinkling of an eye he was gagged, bound and placed on a horse, which the murderous wretches had brought along for the purpose. Poor Billy, in his night clothes was forced to ride with his captors to some unknown destination, but when they halted he was surprised to find that they were in front of Mrs. Cottrell's, where Fox was sleeping.

Knowing the intimate relations between Billy and Fox, and how readily Fox would respond to a call of Billy, the assassins forced the young man to call Fox out, telling him

that his friend (meaning me) had just been killed. As soon as Fox heard the call and recognized the voice of his friend he hurried to the door. Without dressing Fox came on out in the yard to make further inquiries into the cause of my death. When Fox was within a few feet of the gate the wretches shot him dead and without further ado, rode on back to Billy Ward's home, where they released him and let him go his way. Why this dastardly crime was committed, no one ever learned, though it was surmised that a woman was at the bottom of it.

No violence was done Billy, nor was he enjoined to secrecy. The only reason they had for carrying him along with them was to use Fox's best friend's voice to decoy him to his doom.

When the fearful news reached me about daylight, the Davis boys, Beckham and myself mounted our horses and went in search of the murderers. We readily struck their trail, which we followed all day, but lost it at night and gave up the chase.

Three weeks later Jonah Woodbury and I were at Needmore, a wayside store, and as we rode up, saw two heavy-set toughs with disheveled hair and bloodshot eyes standing on the porch of the store. "They are the rascals who killed Fox," whispered Woodbury.

"Well, I'll see what they have to say about it," I replied, attempting to appear unconscious of their presence.

Before we could dismount, the cowardly wretches walked away from the store over to a nearby blacksmith shop and there keenly eyed us. Having gone in the store and made a small purchase as a blind, I came, and with Jonah, walked over towards the blacksmith shop.

"This shop ain't big enough for all of us," said George Miller, one of the knaves, and with this he jerked out his pistol and fired point blank into my face, his bullet relieving me of my hat, but he didn't live to enjoy the close shave he gave me.

As he dropped, Jess Bugg, the other miscreant, ran behind the shop and tried to escape over the palings, but suicided in the attempt, for such a foolish act was nothing short of suicide.

Having put these dastardly whelps out of their earthly

tribulations, the blacksmith gave us the names of the four other murderers of Fox.

A few days later Beckham came across one of them, a fellow named Davis, though no kin to the boys with whom I spent that fateful night, and having nothing else in particular to engage his time, shot him dead on the street.

The other three escaped and fled the country.

CHAPTER IV.

GAD'S HILL TRAIN HOLD-UP.

For several years following the surrender, the country was in a state of feverish discontent bordering on anarchy. Especially is this true concerning the border states. Civilians were forbidden by the Federal government to carry arms; but this is ancient history and needs no comment from me at this distant date.

The south had risked all on the fortunes of war and had lost. Lee had surrendered all the armies of the Confederacy to Grant at Appomattox, overlooking in the terms of surrender the poor boys who had fought longer, harder, and more incessantly under the black flag than any army that had ever fought the enemy in the open field and who had never drawn a penny from the Confederate exchequer. They had not been included in peace palava, and as a consequence, were left to their fate to take care of themselves as best they could. There was but one alternative—fight to the bitter end or submit like felons and meet a felon's death.

Families were still divided against each other; neighbor looked with suspicion on neighbor and friendship was almost an obsolete sentiment. The coolest nerve and the best gun were masters of the situation. Brute force ruled and pandemonium reigned. Feuds were incubated in hotbeds of sedition and hatched out full fledged in every community. No man was safe behind his plow or under his own roof. Men had learned the trade of murder from the parent government and carried it into the private walks of life. Fathers had been indiscriminately slain, sons butchered and innocence debauched. The nobler sentiments of the soul

were dead and men had returned to the primitive life, and the biggest stick in the strongest hand was ruler of his bailiwick. When men had no personal grievances to redress, they joined affinity to those who fancied they had, and the ebb of war was more fearful in its consequences than the flood tide.

The border states were the greatest sufferers. My home was in one, my itinerary in another. To remain in Kentucky meant that I must line up with one side or another in an endless feud. Personal hates became the prevailing sentiment and the thirst for revenge for fancied grievances the dominant purpose in life.

I could not live in Kentucky and remain inactive. There was but one other country in all the world whose every nook and corner I knew, and that was Missouri, the mother wolf who nurses the Remus Cass and the Romulus Clay.

Having participated in several deadly feuds and remained with them till one or both sides was extinguished, I determined to get out of the borders of the state before the next one should come to light, which I knew could not be longer than two or three days.

Acting on this determination, I mounted my horse and once more rode into the purple west, which proved after all to be a leap from the frying pan into the fire.

I had not been in Missouri many days before I met up with some of my old friends, whose hearts had not been softened by adversity, but retained their pristine craving for adventure, and the more desperate the better.

I had scarce recovered from a wound which I carried from Kentucky with me as a memorial of a Breathitt county feud, when the Gad's Hill train robbery was pulled off.

Now, without admitting or denying my participation in this escapade, I will give you the details as nearly as I can remember them from the accounts that reached me and leave it to impartial men as to whether I took part in this desperate game or not.

Gad's Hill was a small station on the Iron Mountain Railroad in Wayne county, Missouri, and consisted of two or three cheap buildings, including the station house. Not a dozen men lived within a radius of twenty miles of the

place, which I must admit made it rather attractive for the purpose of a hold-up.

After the few citizens had been "arrested" and brought to a place of safe keeping, it is reported that Clell Miller flagged the onrushing train that never stopped at this neglected spot except from absolute necessity, and that Cole or Bob Younger, or Bob or Jim or Cole, or perchance each one or all collectively, threw the switch that brought the train onto the side track, which was in strict violation of the dispatcher's orders, and that when the conductor, with his heave coat thrown over his shoulders—for it is said to have been pretty cold—jumped from the train to learn the cause of the unexpected stop, Frank James covered him with his pistol and told him it was nothing but the prank of some mischievous boys who, being a little impecunious, wanted to touch the express company for a small loan and possibly some of the "Plug Hat" brigade—that no one would be hurt unless they demanded "personal security" for whatever amounts they might be pleased to advance, and that the crew and passengers were in the hands of friends, provided that they did not become a little too inquisitive, and that no one would be asked to chip in except those who showed outward signs of being amply able to do so. It is said to have been the work of a few minutes and scarcely worth the trouble, as the gross results showed up less than five thousand dollars in cash.

If reports can be relied on, this must certainly have been a most gentlemanly hold-up, for not a cross or harsh word was spoken, not a threat made, not a shot fired, and no resistance offered.

When the train had been ordered to pull out, the conductor swung on and was waving a glad farewell when the train suddenly came to a stop, and the conductor was ordered to come back and get his overcoat, which had most likely shaken from his shoulders in the first flush of excitement. "Thank you, boys," he said, and waving the "High Ball," the train was soon under way and speeding on to the south.

Now, as a matter of course, this was the work of the gang—at least they claimed it to have been—and was so

reported, but let's examine the original dispatch, which is most likely on file at headquarters in St. Louis:

"No. forty-six was held up here at six ten by five heavily armed men and the express car robbed of all its valuables. The robbers came up to the station a few minutes before train was due, arrested the station agent and put him under guard, then threw the train on the switch. The robbers were all large men—none of them under six feet. They were all masked and started in a southerly direction after the robbery. They were all mounted on fine thoroughbred horses. Great excitement prevails.

"(Signed) IRA A. MERRILL."

I have to enter a demurrer to the charge, as my exceedingly diminutive person comes under the "*Statute of Limitations*."

Take the station agent's statement for its face value—was I there or was I not there?

It has been hinted that the bandits forced the telegraph operator to send in this message. Possibly so, but what puzzles me is, how did the boys know what that operator was batting out on that little copper instrument. None of the accused knew any more about the Morse language than they did about the Talmud in the Original Hebrew.

BELLE STAR

The Fearless Indian Outlaw.

Did you ever see the name in print before? Did you ever hear it spoken? Do you really know whether Belle Star is the name of some registered brand of forty rod busthead, a Kentucky thoroughbred or the favorite entre in a regatta? Have you any idea whether she may have been grand sagemess in the Salvation Army or the chief seneschal in Fiddler's Green? It is more than likely that the name is a new Richmond in the field to you; but it is altogether possible that your father has seen her name in the papers, connected with some very unsavory cuttings up. In any event, it is no reflection on your historic learning to be in complete ignorance of this illustrious personage, for the historian has been remarkably silent concerning her doings. Yet, the history of Arkansas would be as incomplete without the name of Belle Star as it would without that of Jeff Davis of sacred memory.

There was a time within the memory of men now living when this dread name struck terror to the hearts of the timid and caused brave men to buckle an extra holster about their loins before setting out through the territory of her operations.

History may have slammed its doors in the face of this maroon Amazon, but the criminal records of the Great State of Arkansas have not neglected her.

Belle Star was the unfortunate combination of a Cherokee squaw and a *pale face* lady of the upper tendum—a savage of the bloodiest type; a lady of tender emotions; a finished graduate of Carlisle University and a typical daughter of the plains. In her sentimental moods she was a worshipper of Verdi, Gottschaulk, Rubenstein and Wagner. In her thoughtful moments, a devotee of Pliny, and the naturalists; Socrates and the philosophers; Voltaire and the satirists; Homer and the epics; Moore and the lyrics.



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BELLE STAR

The Fearless Indian Outlaw. Always a True Friend to Our Boys.

When her savage nature predominated, her ideals underwent a sudden change, amounting to a complete somersault, and she paid homage to King Philip, Tecumseh, Powhatan, Sitting Bull, Rain-in-the-Face and Geronny-mo.

A more accomplished musician never coaxed dumb ivory into melody; a more daring bandit never hit the trail nor cut a throat for the love of vengeful lust. A more winning smile never illumined the face of a Madonna; a more cruel human being never walked the deck of a pirate ship. She dispensed charities with the lavish hand of true philanthropy and robbed with the strong arm of a Captain Kid. No human ever risked life and liberty in more perilous ways for friendship's sake than did this phenomenally beautiful half savage, nor was the gate to a city of refuge ever opened wider for the distressed than were the doors to her humble mountain home. Belle's home was in the hills overlooking the Canadian river, about thirty miles from Fort Smith, and here she entertained men of her own ilk, who respected her because her personality commanded respect. The Pidgeons were her friends, so were the Cooks. The James Boys' Gang (whatever that might signify) enjoyed her hospitality and admired her for her dauntless courage and honored her because of her well ordered home life.

Men of illustrious though shady records were her staunch champions, while such butchers as Cherokee Bill were her submissive slaves. Such another human nondescript never lived on the western continent. As for myself, I freely admit my admiration for her nobler qualities, while I cannot hide the fact from myself that she was a woman deserving the severest castigation of the law. As a cattle rustler, she has never had an equal among the stronger sex, and as a horse thief, she has had no superiors.

To sum up her character in one trite paragraph, I will simply state that Belle was a maroon Diana in the chase, a Venus in beauty, a Minerva in wisdom, a thief, a robber, a murderer and a generous friend.

A more fearless human being never went forth to deeds of bloody mischief nor washed bloodier hands to dance nimbly over the ivory keys of a piano. With her long black

hair flowing loose in the wind, with her fiery charger dashing at mad speed ahead of a hundred determined men, she was the picture of grace, and a whirlwind of beauty on its way to perdition.

Now, it is not my purpose to write a history of this indescribable woman, for a whole volume could be devoted to her, then leave half her illustrious though shady deeds untold. I merely write of her as a pleasant chapter in the volume of my own life and in one pathetic act of a drama wherein I was a mere spectator.

It was through the kindly offices of a good friend, now living, that I met Belle in one of the leading hotels of Fort Smith, and having heard of my unsavory life and my loyalty to friends, she readily confided to me some of her peculiar doings and extended me a cordial invitation to visit her retreat whenever I should chance to come up that way. It was an invitation I could not ignore and soon thereafter was her guest. As I had just come out of Missouri, where the slueths were on the scout for me, it can be well imagined how I enjoyed my vacation. Belle welcomed me with the glad hand of fraternal fellowship and her home was my retreat as long and so often as I had occasion to make it such.

It was on my second visit to her home when I heard from her lips the story that follows and I repeat as nearly as it is possible to do so from memory, and in this connection I want to state that my memory, though filled with many harrowing and tragic incidents of the long ago, still clings to this story which represents poor Belle Star as something besides a desperado, a train robber and a cattle rustler.

It was early one morning of a beautiful Indian summer when one of Belle's servants brought her favorite horse to the gate and Belle came forth from her room handsomely attired for a ride. Her long black hair hung far below her waist in two monster plaits, as black as a raven's wing, though wavy even in the plaits, the inclination to curl coming from her father's side of the house. On her beautifully shaped hands she wore long gauntlet gloves and carried a riding quirt. Around her well moulded waist was strapped a heavy leather belt, to which hung her two heavy pistols. A tailored riding habit was her attire and on her wavy hair

sat jauntily a soft felt hat securely anchored with heavy hat pins.

On this occasion her face was radiant with a secret happiness and her charming smile seemed like a benediction.

She exchanged the greeting of the morning most charmingly, then said:

"Captain, I am out on a lark of mercy this morning. I want you to make yourself thoroughly at home and await my return. I hope to be back before night, but may, of course, be detained. I owe myself and another a joint duty today and I want to fulfill this duty before another sunset."

"I wish you success," I said, not presuming to inquire into the nature of her mission.

"Yes, I'm keenly desirous of success on this particular occasion, Captain, and if you would like to hear my little story, sit down and I will tell you."

"I am always interested in anything that concerns you, my friend," said I, rather gallantly, and when we were seated she began her story.

"You will think it strange of me, Captain, but nevertheless I am but human after all, and notwithstanding the awful career I have chosen, I am something else than a desperado. I am a woman, which means a great deal that men cannot understand.

"It was two years ago I met a young man from the east, to all appearances a tenderfoot, but who proved by test that he was equal to any condition that might be thrust upon him. We met at the hotel. I was at the piano and my playing attracted him. He expressed admiration at my touch and my technique and my repertoire. We soon entered into a discussion of the grand old masters and our tastes seemed to be in perfect harmony. Well, to make matters short, it seemed to be a case of love at first sight. He told me many things I had never heard before and told them in a free, open and even bold manner that few men would have dared tell on so short an acquaintance. But it did not displease me. I was fascinated with his manner of speech and charmed with his personality. He wanted to know where I lived and who I was—and, in short, everything about me. This, however, I declined to tell him, giv-

ing as an excuse that I was a ward of the government, after a fashion, and therefore must needs be very circumspect. Well, this only intensified his desire to know me better, and I promised him on my return to the city I would make it a point to have him advised.

"I went again and again, all the time admonishing him to secrecy, telling him it was for my own good I had to be so reticent. Had I told him it was out of consideration for him that I remained silent, he would have dashed caution to the wind and insisted to know.

"He could see very plainly that Indian blood predominated in me and this leant another feature of interest, for he had read many books wherein the Indian maiden was the heroine and he seemed to think he had found the foundation of a beautiful romance in me.

"Time wore on and we met time and again. I would not let him visit me, for even then I was suspected of playing a conspicuous part in a railroad hold-up, though none suspected but the sleuths.

"I had asked him in the name of the affection he so strongly declared for me not to enquire my name or my place of residence, that I would tell him all at the proper time. I am now fully convinced that he was faithful to his promise.

"One day I appointed a trysting place where we frequently met for our little *tete-a-tetes* and life then seemed a paradise, for I loved and was loved by my ideal.

"It was about six months after my first meeting with this man, Mr. Charles Large, when a band of Cherokee Indians made a raid on a settlement back in the country and Charles was deputized to go in pursuit of them. He soon overtook the marauders, who outnumbered his men at least ten to one; yet Charles did not hesitate to give battle, and though he lost several men, he drove the Cherokees back into the nation. I met Charles soon afterwards and listened with eager delight to his graphic narration of the event and noted his extreme modesty in taking any credit to himself. This was pleasing to me, for it is so different to the tales I'm accustomed to hear. When he had told me all, I extolled his bravery, but showed him where and how he had made blunders which I hoped would profit him if such a case

ever came up again. He thanked me and said, 'If you were a man instead of the finest little girl in the west, I'd never think of going out again without you.' To which I replied, 'If you will let me, I'll go anyway. I can ride a horse as well as any of your men and am just as good a shot as the best. If you'll let me, I'll go.' To this he assented, and just three weeks later that same band of Indians, with a hundred or so more, came into the settlement and committed outrages of the very worst sort. The next day I was riding by Charles Large's side, happy in the contemplation that I could show my lover what a horsewoman I was and how little danger counted with me.

"It was late in the afternoon of the second day out that we got on a hot trail, and all operating under my directions, we soon came in sight of the murderous fugitives. Then the chase began. My horse was the swiftest and in a little while I was far in the lead.

"When within about a hundred yards of the Indians, I recognized a devil of a chief, White Cloud by name, and when the recollection of injuries my mother had suffered at the hands of this scoundrel came thronging upon me, I was a woman no longer, but a demon. Every drop of savage blood in my veins began to boil and I was lost to every feeling of humanity and thought only of that revenge which I had craved and which had been so long and stubbornly denied me. Urging my horse on at full speed, I was soon in firing distance and the wily old rascal, with twenty of his bloody followers, wheeled and fired at me. But unmindful of this, I urged my horse on, and when within fifty yards of the old scamp I gave the war whoop of my people. White Cloud recognized it and wheeled again to shoot, but he was too late. All the revenge I had craved was mine. Fired by the savage impulse of my mother's people, I sprang from my horse and quickly relieved the writhing old chief of his scalp while yet alive. But this was not enough to satisfy. I must know he was dead and that he died at my hands, so while he was squirming in the agonies of a mortal wound, I danced a death dance about him to intensify his agony and wound up the gruesome ceremony by plunging my great knife through his heart and with another stroke got his scalp. When I raised up Charles Large and twenty

more were horrified spectators of my awful vengeance. I wanted to win the praise of the man I loved and for this reason held aloft the bloody trophy. Several of his men cheered lustily, but not the man I loved. He sat on his horse transfixed like a graven image, and not a word of praise or a smile of approval escaped his tight drawn lips. Cold, stern and pitiless he seemed to pierce me through and through with those steel gray eyes, and he did not utter a word. It was like a dagger in my heart and I slung the bloody trophy from me, mounted my horse and without a word wheeled and left them to pursue their savage game.

"To my surprise and chagrin no one called to me as I was leaving. No one spoke. I was alone with the recollection of my bloody deed.

"About half the posse returned two days later. The rest were killed. Charles received a painful wound, but escaped. They had run into another band of Indians who had been left behind for the purpose of ambush in the event of pursuit.

"As a matter of course, I felt the bitter cut my lover had given me most keenly, but when once off to myself, I could not help admire his stoicism and honor him for his silent rebuke.

"All that night I brooded over the cold condemning look in the face of the man I loved, but even my Indian nature did not crave revenge. He was a gentleman and not a savage. I was then a savage and no longer a gentlewoman. I could appreciate his delicacy of feeling, because I am of his blood, but he could not appreciate the savage fury that drove me to this bloody deed because he was no part of a savage.

"After that I went no more to our trysting place, for I realized I had outraged decency and no longer had a right to claim the respect of an honorable man like Charles Large. It was plain to see we could not be congenial. The fault is in the blood. I must give up all hopes of ever claiming Charles for my own and I must say I did it very gracefully, considering the depths of my love. The great spirit had cast us in different moulds. I would not complain of my lot. I was born half savage. I would cultivate my nature till the other half was savage also.

"Now, if you have ever loved, Captain, you must appreciate how hard it is to pursue the even tenor of your way while every scene, every thought, and every sound of nature called up the memory of the sweetest days the heart has ever known, and the contemplation of what might have been is like a poisoned arrow in the heart.

"I could not nurse my dark musings any longer. I must shake myself loose from this dream of bliss and link my life to the realities of this world. I would sulk no more. The voice of a hundred generations of savages called me to the plains again. I heeded the voice and one luckless day rode forth in quest of adventure. An hour out I met up with Cherokee Bill. He had a scheme. It sounded good and promised danger. I entered into his plans and we held up the stage. It was a rich haul and you know from experience the richer the haul, the more intense the search that follows. It soon became noised around that I was one of the robbers. Charles Large at this time had secured an appointment as deputy United States marshal, but even then he did not know who Belle Star was. I had masqueraded long enough. I resolved now to let Charles Large know who I was and to this end wrote him a letter confessing that I was one of the robbers and that I would rather die at his hands than to live by grace of the law and its minions—that I realized it was his duty to capture me if he could and that I would despise his memory if he shirked his duty. I further told him I would not attempt to kill him if I ever got into a mix-up with his posse, but his followers would not be so well protected. Then in a moment of weakness I recalled all the happy days we had spent together in our trysting place and asked him as a token of appreciation of the love I bore him, to instruct his men to kill me, for I would never surrender. I did not neglect to tell him the reckless life I had lived in the past and declared my intention of leading a more desperate existence in the future—that I was a savage and could not help it any more than he could help being a gentleman. The messenger left with the letter but before he had returned I sincerely regretted my weakness and would have recalled it, but it was too late. A year passed away and Charles learned the happy lesson of forgetfulness. But his heart was empty. It must

be filled. He fell in love with a sweet little girl of his own people. I know her well and I do not blame him for loving her; yet the thoughts that I had lost him forever drove me to desperation. I sought to drown the blessed memory of the happy days in deeds of foolhardy daring and wild adventure. Opportunities came thick and fast. I valued the lives of other human beings as little as my own. Death is the end of all things. The dead do not suffer. It is only the living. I did not hesitate to kill and though on many an occasion I fought desperately for my life and saved it at the cost of many others, I always had a secret longing to meet Charles Large in the pursuing posse and die at his hands. I do not fear death. 'Tis life I am afraid of. Death seems to flee from those who seek it, but trails the coward like a bloodhound.

"Well, it so happened one day while riding through the woods near the home of Charles Large's fiance that a limb from a dead tree came crashing through the overhanging limbs and hitting me a glancing lick on the head and shoulders, knocking me to the ground, where I remained for several hours in an unconscious condition. When I woke I was in a soft bed and gentle hands were soothing my wounds. This good Samaritan was none other than Irene Manning, the betrothed of Charles Large, deputy United States marshal.

"Notwithstanding the fact that Irene knew who I was and the things I had been charged with, she nursed me tenderly and spared nothing for my comfort. When I was able to sit up, she told me she had sent a note to my home advising my friends of my mishap and telling them I was in safe hands and would return as soon as I was able to ride. It was not as difficult to get admission to my home then as it is now. I did not have my bloody minions posted till about six months ago.

"It did not take long for me to regain my strength and when I was ready to set out Irene called me to her room, and putting her arm tenderly around my waist, said, 'Belle, I think you know Charles Large, don't you?' I assured her I had only a passing acquaintance with him and that was not a very pleasant one. Then I asked her why she had mentioned him. 'He's now a deputy United States marshal,'

she said, 'and I was just thinking he might take it into his head to arrest you and if he does I know you are not going to submit.'

"'No, I will never be taken alive, Irene, never in the world. I don't mind going a swift route to death, but I will never look through iron bars.' 'Then, if Charles attempts to capture you, you will kill him, of course.' 'No; had he attempted it before this accident of mine, it might have fared pretty rough with him, but I know your secret, Irene. You have unconsciously revealed it. You and he are engaged to be married and naturally you are always anxious about him when he is out dealing with the lawless element. Isn't that it?'

"'Yes, Belle, we are to be married in three months and I am so uneasy about him, for I think he has more courage than discretion, don't you?'

"'Now, let me set your mind at rest on one point, Irene. You have been good to me and Belle Star never forgets a kindness. I owe you much and I will repay you in part by a solemn promise never to hurt your lover. I can get out of his way without having to kill him, but I make no promise concerning his men. If they crowd in on me I will certainly defend myself to the bitter end.'

"'When I had assured Irene that I would under no circumstances harm her lover, her gratitude knew no bounds, and she vowed that if Charles Large attempted my life and she heard of it, she would never speak to him again. This was about the last thing she said to me when we parted at the gate and I rode off into the night.

"'Now, Captain, you have the first chapter in the little novelette.

"'Just one week after I had returned home I planned, and with the help of Cherokee Bill, pulled off the Little Rock stage robbery. It was another rich haul and the sleuths got busy. Two days following the hold-up I was riding alone about fifty miles from here, when a sharp turn in the road brought me almost into the arms of a posse numbering about twenty-five men. They were completely fagged out, some sitting side-ways in their saddles and the others almost standing in one stirrup to rest the other weary leg. But they recognized me and their leader, Charles Large, de-

manded my surrender. I did not wait to mince matters, but fired point blank into the face of the man who rode by his side and saw him tumble to the ground, then I wheeled and made for the opposite point of the compass. Then the chase began. Volley after volley they fired at me without any damage, and as I dashed away at the top speed of my horse, I fired back into the posse and every time I fired some poor fellow dropped. But the others, undaunted by the fall of their comrades and urged on by the hopes of reward, kept up the chase like men bereft of their senses. Before the chase was over, five of the twenty lay dead in the road.

Charles Large was in the lead and I noticed with glad surprise he had never raised his gun to shoot. I do not think he had any intention of killing me, for he was a good shot and could easily have done so, for he was in no danger from my guns. I think he discovered that I had never fired a shot at him.

"After a two-mile chase, when Charles had gotten far in the lead of his men, I checked my horse's speed and had the happy satisfaction of seeing Charles gaining on me little by little, while the others were at least a hundred yards behind, and the distance between us increasing all the time. When Charles was within fifty yards of me, I looked square into his face as he raised his pistol, took deliberate aim at a cloud and crack down. There was no doubting it. He was shooting to fool his men. At that very moment I could have thrown myself at his feet and worshipped him, but it was not altogether a time and place for sentimental scenes. But I could at least let him know I would not kill him. Throwing my gun across my lap, I shouted, 'That was a mighty bad shot, Mr. Officer; try again, maybe you'll have better luck. See, I will not shoot at you.' He raised his gun and fired again, the blaze of his gun pointing upward at an angle of forty-five degrees. It was a first rate makeshift and I returned the compliment by shooting past him and cutting down one of his men at least fifty yards in his rear.

"He shot again at the same angle and I yelled to him over my shoulder, 'That is unworthy of you as an officer, Charles Large. It is your duty to capture or kill me. You can't capture, so why don't you kill?'

"I feel reasonably sure he heard every word I said, and as we dashed madly on, I heard above the clatter of horses' feet these words, which I will cherish all the days of my life: 'Belle, I am your friend and God knows—'

"Then he lunged forward over his horse's head, killed by one of his own men.

"This was the last of the chase. The spirit of the chase was dead and his comrades quickly gathered around their fallen chieftain ostensibly to render assistance, but in truth it was only a subterfuge for giving up the dangerous chase, for already they had lost nine men. I pursued my journey and in a few minutes was lost to sight of the posse.

"The next day news spread far and wide that Belle Star had killed a deputy United States marshal and half of his posse. You can easily imagine what a furore this created and the price on my head was raised from five to ten thousand dollars.

"I knew how my home would be threatened and put on fifty extra guards, under the direction of Cherokee Bill. Some of your own friends volunteered their services and after a few puny attempts to reach my home, the posses let up altogether and have not tried to enter my little kingdom in several months.

"Now, Captain, we have come to the end of the second chapter. The story is incomplete and will remain so till I return. I am now going to see Irene Manning and tell her how her lover met his death. I have the proofs, for when Charles Large was shot, his face was turned towards me. There can be no doubt he was shot in the back and anyone who knew Charles Large will readily concede that he never turned his back to the enemy. Now, good-bye till I return."

She mounted her horse and soon was lost in the shadows of the forest. It was eleven o'clock at night when Belle rode up to her gate, where Cherokee Bill and I sat awaiting her return. She dismounted, and turning the animal over to her trusty slave, said to me, 'Well, Captain, the last chapter is a short one. I had no trouble convincing Irene that I had been faithful to my promise and her father fully agreed that Charles met his death by accident at the hands of his own men, or by design, he knew not which. I am

now pretty well convinced it was not an accident, but a preconceived act prompted by jealousy and that the authorities will soon have the guilty wretch swinging at the end of a rope. If I knew who the cowardly wretch is, I would never rest till I had levied the proper toll." Then she added with a smile, "But I reckon I've got my hands full looking after my own personal affairs." Thus ended the remarkable story of this most extraordinary woman and I feel practically sure every word she uttered was true.

After the death of Charles Large, Belle plunged more recklessly into her desperate undertakings and the "toll" she "levied" against the state of Arkansas and the nation was something awful to contemplate. Two years following the events narrated in this little story, Belle was waylaid and foully murdered just as she had crossed the Canadian river and her horse was scaling the rocky banks that bordered her enchanted domain.

Whatever became of her effects, I have never learned, but this I know, the dirty assassin never appeared to claim his reward of ten thousand dollars. Belle left a sweet little bright-eyed girl to mourn the death of a murdered mother, who has grown up to be a beautiful woman, and I am told she is now living in Fort Smith and goes by the name of Susie Younger. The reader may remember reading in the newspapers the public execution of Cherokee Bill in Fort Smith in the year 1894. Many of Belle's retainers were killed while resisting arrest and the rest of them saved themselves by flight.

Cherokee Bill got all that was coming to him and I applaud the officers of the law for their duty so courageously performed, but when I think of poor Belle Star's tragic fate, I cannot suppress a wish that her assassin may meet his just reward.

In many respects, Belle was a noble woman, while in others she was a slave to the savage blood that coursed through her veins.

Light be the rabbit's tread in the rustling leaves above her neglected grave.

CHAPTER V.

THE STE. GENEVIEVE (MISSOURI) BANK ROBBERY. A PLEASANT STAY IN ST. LOUIS.

As the life I had been forced by the Federal government to lead justified the prevailing opinion that one of my *aliases* was mixed up with the Gad's Hill incident and as the country began to swarm with detectives, sleuths, secret service men, sheriffs from all the surrounding counties and posses from everywhere, it became very evident that if I had gotten anything out of the Gad's Hill enterprise and wanted to keep it, there might be safer places than Missouri for this purpose. Wherefore, with two of my best friends, I headed south through the nation and came into Texas in the spring of the year, where we all secured employment with a cattleman who was on the eve of sending a large herd into the feeding grounds of Northwest Kansas, a distance of seven hundred miles, which we covered in four months and received as compensation \$240 each. This was a princely sum and as we always had an idea that money was made to spend, we headed for St. Louis, where we could dispose of it in regal fashion. As soon as we were quartered at one of the leading hotels, we sought out a clothier, a haberdashery and a boot concern, and were soon rigged out a la mode, and I fancy we presented about as gentile an appearance as any of the high society who ambled the streets, dressed in their Prince Alberts, their silk hats and their kid boots. We were outlaws all right, but from our general appearance and get-up, detectives would as soon have thought of going into the pulpit for a bandit as to have attempted to arrest us.

We went and came at will, nor ever feared for our safety. We were not in St. Louis long when the newspapers came out with a blood curdling account of the Genevieve bank robbery. The old bunch was accused, of course, and the sleuths got another job.

That very afternoon Jesse and I strolled down to the Union Station just to see what was going on and as we entered the main waiting room we saw a band of heavily

armed men discussing some matter of seeming importance in a most excited and feverish manner. I made it convenient to pass in ear shot of these most formidable gentlemen and heard them discussing the Genevieve affair. "There's no doubt of it," I heard one of them say. "They are hemmed in, in a boggy swamp not more than a quarter of a mile wide and there is positively no avenue of escape. We tracked the whole gang there and quickly had it surrounded. At this moment there are not less than five hundred determined men guarding that swamp, but none who are foolhardy enough to try to stalk them."

"How do the authorities know it is the James boys?" asked another perambulating arsenal.

"They were recognized as they mounted their horses," said the first.

"Who recognized them?"

"Some of the leading citizens."

"What do the leading citizens know about the James boys, I'd like to know. You speak as though they were on the most intimate terms with them."

"Look," said the first speaker excitedly, "haven't you seen the evening papers?"

"You mean the pictures of the gang?"

"Yes, here it is," and with this he snatched a folded paper from his pocket and hastily threw it into readable shape. The other gentleman didn't deign to look at the paper, but cynically remarked, "Yes, I saw the papers. The outlaws undoubtedly posed for their artist before making their getaway. It's the general custom of robbers, I believe."

As I had not seen a copy of the paper, which was just from the press, I edged my way up to the excited gentleman and with a bow and a smirk, asked permission to see a real picture of those desperate fellows. He held one edge and I the other and together we discussed the gentlemen from every angle. "What do you think of them?" he finally asked.

"I am afraid I am not a competent judge," I replied.

About this time Jesse James came up and asked permission to look over the bandits and when asked his opinion he replied with a touch of irony, "Just about as much like them as they are of David and Goliath."

"You know them, then?"

"I have seen Jesse and the little guy there with the curly locks."

"What's his name?" eagerly asked the human interrogation point.

"He has no particular name, I believe. Seems to change it from time to time for his own convenience."

"And you don't think the pictures fair likenesses?"

"Well, to be perfectly frank with you (then my Adam's apple grew to the size of a new ground pumpkin) they don't seem to represent any branch of the human family I have ever had the pleasure of meeting up with yet, but if they are hemmed up in that narrow swamp, the authorities ought not have much trouble smoking them out."

"That's just what I have been telling the boys, but they are all a little leary, and I tell you what's a fact, I'm going right into that skirt of woods and either they or I will have to be hauled home in wagons. That's my style of doing business."

"I wish you success," said the dare devil, and with this we walked away to let them theoretically capture the outrageous rascals. It is claimed that circumstantial evidence is the surest to convict on. It ought to work with equal facility the other way. This then, being the case, come let us reason together and by all the testimony see if we were the parties who relieved the Savings Association of Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, of its *surplus*.

At the time we were discussing the robbery with sleuths in the Union Station, they told us positively that at that very moment the gang was surrounded in a boggy swamp not many miles away. Officers are conservators of the law and what they say about criminals ought not be disputed.

We could not have been in both places at the same time and we certainly were in St. Louis.

Maybe the officers made a mistake. They sometimes do. Possibly the gang was in St. Louis, having come through the said boggy swamp not more than a quarter of a mile wide. They were right about the boggy part of it at any rate. Here are the details of the robbery as nearly as I can recall them—from the accounts I read long ago:

The Savings Association was one of the strongest country

banks in the state of Missouri, carrying at all times enormous deposits. The outlaws were good business men—in a way, and made it a point to do their banking business with solvent concerns.

The Ste. Genevieve Savings Association was this kind of an institution, but as this old and reputable banking house was winding up its affairs preparatory to going out of business, the boys thought it about time to withdraw their deposits and if perchance they had no deposits, other deposits would answer their requirements just as well; so, on the morning of May 27th, they rode into town and fearing possibly the withdrawal of their accounts might precipitate a "run," they did not confide the object of their visit to any of the depositors, but walked into the bank and presenting their *credentials*, asked Mr. Harris in a gentlemanly manner to hand over the *available cash assets*. In the bank at this time was a young man by the name of Rozier, a son of the president, who, not liking the general aspect of things, ducked down behind some furniture and escaped to the outside, where he gave the alarm. In the meantime, Mr. Harris busied himself waiting on his importunate customers and delivered into their hands something over four thousand dollars.

Having no further business with the cashier or his bank, the bandits hurried to their horses, and when they were at a safe distance, the people, as is usually the case in matters of this sort, gave pursuit with the full determination of not overtaking them if it could be avoided. When the robbers were about a mile out of town, here came a posse, lickety split, *in hot pursuit*, but when the fugitives wheeled and opened fire on them, they quickly saw the error of their ways and amended them post haste. In this little escapade no one was killed or wounded and the bank had enough reserve to cover the small loss without inconvenience to its depositors.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEREIN WE OR SOMEBODY ELSE HELD UP A TRAIN ON THE KANSAS PACIFIC RAILROAD NEAR MUNCIE, KANSAS.

Here's about the way one of the historians began his *graphic* description of this incident:

"Hark! The rumble of wheels. The outlaws, all being well mounted, put their ears to the rails and listened. It was the oncoming train from the Pacific coast, laden with gold dust, money and precious stones. The world famous desperado's heart leaped with the anticipation of a rich haul. The world famous desperado deployed his men up and down the track. It was the crucial moment. The headlight of the train flickered like a star over a distant prairie hillock. With bated breath and folded arms, the world famous desperado stood like a graven image silhouetted against the black wall of night, his keen eye peeled on the oscillating light. The water tank stood hard by the track. The world famous desperado knew the train would have to stop for water. Like a crouching lion, the world famous desperado awaited his unsuspecting prey," etc. Now there you have it.

"The outlaws, all being well mounted, put their ears to the rails and listened." They must have been good horsemen to perform such a feat. Well mounted, they put their ears to the rails and listened. Isn't it marvelous? The train was *laden* with gold dust, money and precious stones. What a cargo! It was enough to tempt the world famous desperado or any other man. The world famous desperado's heart leaped with the anticipation *et cetera*. But whether like a kangaroo or a horned toad he failed to state.

The light flickered like a star over the hillock. What a beautiful spectacle! With bated breath, the world famous — He failed to state the kind of bait used. With folded arms this blankety blank gent stood silhouetted against the black wall of night. How I would love to have that picture.

The water tank stood hard by the track. I don't know just how the water tank managed it, but I guess it is all right. Like a crouching lion, the W. F. D. awaited his

unsuspecting prey. Now, just how the gentleman managed to stand like a graven image silhouetted against the black wall of night and crouch like a lion at the same time is a feat that should entitle him to first place in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. To say the least of it, the W. F. D. must have been an acrobat of the first magnitude to sit on his horse and put his ear to the rail, then stand like a graven image while he crouched like a lion. It is nothing short of wonderful.

Now the facts in the case—as gathered from reliable sources, are about as follows: Muncie was a little town on the K. P. about 6 miles west of Kansas City, hard by the Kaw river. About one mile east of the village was a water tank, where the trains invariably stopped for water.

The bandits concealed themselves at this point and waited for the horde of Croesus to roll in. When the train came to a stop, the *crouching lion* and his whelps sprang from their hiding places. McDaniels quickly covered the engineer. Yes, it must have been Mc, for the W. F. D. could not pull off the whole stunt single-handed, even though he might have been capable of standing like an army of graven images and crouching like a whole flock of lions. While Mc held the engineer and fireman, others of the band *deployed* in various and sundry ways, some taking charge of the express car, while others paid their respects to the plug hat brigade in the coaches. In a few minutes the bold missionaries in the coach had finished their evangelical work and the W. F. D. and another rather determined gent sprang from the express car pretty well in funds. It was a rather profitable investment for the boys, for they secured a goodly sum from the passengers, as well as fifty thousand dollars in currency, and twenty-five thousand dollars worth of gold dust from their old reliable stand-by, Messrs. Wells Fargo and Company.

Among the plug hat brigade not a woman was molested. They were already in enough terror without having to pungle. They did not wear plug hats. Possibly that is what saved them.

After the brigands had levied their assessment against the plutocracy and were backing out of the coach, a little curly-headed member of the gang backed up into one of

the gentler sex, who pluckily resented the indignity and yelled at the top of her voice, "Get your carcass from against me, you little kinky-headed devil," and the impolite rascal didn't have the decency to "Beg pardon, madam."

The work in hand being accomplished with swiftness and skill, the bandits, including his excellence the W. F. D., mounted their horses and were soon safe in the swamp of the Kaw.

When the train reached Kansas City, only five miles from the scene of the hold-up, police headquarters and the sheriff were quickly notified and the man hunters struck out on their perilous mission.

It is reported that the sheriff's posse followed the bandits all the next day, having tracked them through Westport in Jackson county and found the identical spot where the miscreants stopped and divided their valuable plunder. Doubtless they cut down a sapling and took it in to K. C., swearing it was the identical shrub to which the W. F. D.'s horse was hitched while the boys were whacking up. The cunning of the sleuth is something to excite admiration, but they seldom did anything except to find a clew.

Two days after the robbery Bud McDaniels, one of the gang, went into Kansas City for the purpose of blowing in some of his *hard* earned cash on his girl. Hiring a horse and buggy of a liveryman, he called on his girl, but for some reason "she was out," or could not see him. This piqued the rather sensitive gentleman and to drown his disappointment and chagrin, he put his little finger above his thumb rather too frequently and was soon in a very inebriated condition, but he had hired his rig and was determined to get his moneys' worth out of it, wherefore he dashed up and down the streets in such a wild and reckless manner the officers took possession of his person for the purpose of incarcerating it till he could sleep off his jag.

Bud was too far gone to offer any resistance and, therefore, submitted calmly to the arrest. He was taken to the police station and before locking him up the officers examined him, and to their surprise found two heavy pistols, several pieces of jewelry and more than a thousand dollars in currency. When questioned as to where he acquired the jewelry, Bud's memory had slipped a cog and the officers

set about to locate the place of its purchase. They could not find it in the city and had little trouble in coming to the conclusion it was taken from the express car at Muncie. Bud could not give a satisfactory account of himself for the past few days and had to go back to Kansas for trial. He had a preliminary examination and was held over for investigation by the grand jury, but while being taken to jail made a break and got away from the officers.

A short while afterwards he was located and in the attempt to elude the officers, lost his worthless life. But he never squealed.

CHAPTER VII.

TO OLD MEXICO. UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR AT A DANCE.

The Muncie affair was a new inspiration to us to move on. But where? We had never tried Old Mexico, why not there? But few of the boys wanted the long trip and besides, it was not advisable to move in such numbers. Jesse was in for the trip, so was I, but before starting out we decided to visit around surreptitiously among our people east of the Mississippi. Accordingly, we set our faces towards the rising sun and came into Logan county once more, and while there I made all the necessary arrangements for a new home for my aged mother, the work on which began at once and was completed long after we had left the settlement. On Jesse's suggestion, we went to see Wood Hite, a cousin of Jesse, and having laid our plans before him, he signified a willingness to accompany us. The willingness soon ripened into a desire and we were made ready for the long, long ride.

I remember on the long journey we only crossed two railroads, the M. & O. in Tennessee and another road in Texas, the name of which has escaped me. It was not much of a road, however, as it only ran from Shreveport, Louisiana, to Marshall, Texas—then, as Barnum would say, back again, doubling its importance.

I have no doubt it was a road of considerable importance in those days, but in all likelihood it has been merged into some trunk line long ago.

We crossed the state of Texas and came to the Rio Grande a few miles from Monterey, where we found a little picturesque village to our liking on the banks of the boundary river. Here we deported ourselves as men of affairs and were most hospitably received when it became noised around that we were wealthy cattlemen of the United States, prospecting in their vicinity.

In a short while Jesse was able to make himself understood in their native tongue—at least he said he could and there were grounds for his claim, as he could go through their conversational calasthenics pretty well and was able

to enterlard the vowel "O" in every word. But as for myself, had I remained there till this day, I don't believe I could have learned to call a dog in that outlandish tongue.

Being pretty well in funds and naturally of generous natures, we were liberal spenders and altogether handled ourselves as gentlemen of affairs. In this manner we gratiated ourselves in the favor of our associates, through whom we had access to the best homes and naturally got on the sunny side of the gentler sex, who seemed particularly fond of Jesse and by no means indifferent to my attempted blandishments.

For three weeks we moved in and out among the people in the most cordial social relations and were having the time of our lives when the gates of Paradise were suddenly slammed in our faces.

It came about in this way:

For our special benefit a Fandango had been arranged in some kind of an adobe shack, and we were in the midst of a mazy whirl when a greaser who had never looked with favor on our suave ways with the senoritas deliberately stepped on Jesse's foot in the exhilarating dance, and catching Jesse's eye, indicated by a nod of his head that he had done it as a challenge.

But the dance went on to the trumming of guitars, and when it was over Jesse came to me and told me of his experience with the greaser.

"What would you do about it?" he eagerly asked.

"Pass it up unnoticed," I replied, for we were certainly in no position to raise a rough house in such a land of treachery where every gallant carried his stiletto or bowie and was so proficient in the use thereof.

It was a bitter pill for Jesse, but he took it down without water, and when the next dance was called, each of us had a languid-eyed, romantically-inclined beauty on our arm.

I was not more than ten feet from Jesse when I saw him jerk up his foot like he might have stepped on a hot iron, and his face was livid with pent up passion. The greaser, passing by, had deliberately stepped on it and was grinning with fiendish delight at the discomfort he had caused. In an instant Jesse subdued his passion and continued the dance, but only for a moment. The greaser re-

peated his devilish tactics with renewed force and venom. Instantly Jesse let go his modest hold of the girl, sprang at the greaser and jerking him by the collar, hurled him nearly across the room. In an instant he was up and his flashing blade was no more than three inches from Jesse's heart, when a well directed bullet stayed the further progress of the murderous blade and the greaser lunged backward, in his fall upsetting a dancing couple. This seemed to be the signal for a general attack, and before Wood and I could reach the side of our comrade knives were hacking at us from every direction, but when we three came together and formed a triangle with our backs to each other, it was a matter of physical impossibility to reach us with those carving sets. In this manner we shuffled along toward the door, sprang out, mounted our horses and five minutes later were on our very ungenerous Uncle-in-Law Sam's side of the stream.

How many we disabled in this little joust, I am unable to say, but this I do say, and that right sincerely—we shot no man nor hurt anyone but those who had their murderous blades at our hearts.

When we were out of harm's way and had time to deliberate over the unfortunate incident, we all, figuring in our own way, came to the conclusion that our conduct had aroused the jealousy of these passionate people and the dance was a decoy for our destruction. However, I must say in justification of the women, that they were in complete ignorance of the diabolical plot, for I sincerely believe that Jesse's bewitching little enamorata would have given him a tip and gotten us all out of the way for his sake.

Now what were we to do? Our dreams of peace "neath tropical skies" had vanished into thin air. The United States seemed to be a happy hunting ground for detectives and secret service men and we were the quarry.

"One country seems to be about as good for us as another," I remarked to Jesse as we rode along brooding over our unlooked for hard luck.

"You'd better say, one country is about as bad as another," suggested Jesse, and for the next few miles he seemed for one time in life down on his luck. I really believe thoughts of the little senorita had as much to do with

his short lived spell of blues as anything else, for ever and anon he would draw a deep breath and say, "One of those devils will gallivant her home," or, "Wasn't she a peach?" Some such remark bubbling out every now and then made it very plain to me and Wood Hite that Jesse must have been pretty much enamored and that the greaser must have been the most aggrieved party.

CHAPTER VIII.

FAREWELL TO MEXICO, HER LANGUID-EYED BEAUTIES AND HER STILLETTOED GENTRY.

"Now what do you think?" asked Wood Hite as we jogged along the plains the next day.

"I could be sent to Sing Sing for my thoughts," said Jesse. "I seem to be rather down on my luck. Thought we had struck a bonanza in that settlement.

"Well, you did the next best thing," said Wood. "You struck a greaser all right."

"Yes, but I didn't want to hurt those poor fellows. They have troubles enough among themselves, I judge, without importing it."

"Oh, cut it out," said Wood, "you couldn't help it."

"Yes I could," replied Jesse. "I had no business trying to play Beau Brummel. It isn't in our line of business."

"But that's a business everybody engages in when the opportunity offers. It's what played whaley in Eden."

"But wasn't she a beauty?" said Jesse, his face illumined by the sweet memory of his Maria.

"She certainly was," said Wood. "A perfect Madonna, but a little off color, perhaps."

"What did you think of her, Kit?" asked the love smitten swain of me.

"I didn't see her, Jesse," I replied. "I had one of my own who was so redolent with garlic I occupied most of my time wishing I was at work in a glue factory. How was yours in this respect?"

"Change the subject," said Jesse petulantly. "You moon-shiners have no more poetry in your souls than a couple of coyotes."

I think he was right about it. Poetry and romance played a very inconspicuous part in our lives, though now and then my thoughts would turn back to Logan county and my mind seemed to be elevated above my occupation, and a longing possessed me to quit the trail and settle somewhere where the sleuths cease to trouble and the outlaw can lay aside his gory trophies and take up the peaceful pursuits of life.

Enough brooding over the past.

Passing through Texas, we came into the nation, where we remained for several days the welcomed guests of Boudenot, chief of the Cherokee nation. Here we rested up from our long hot ride and occupied our time in innocent amusement, often with games of chance, wherein we always let the wily chief come out a little ahead of the game, which kept our maroon host in a most excellent humor and intensified our welcome.

Taking leave of this most cordial potentate, we pushed on towards Missouri, but for what purpose, I dare say, none of us knew. As we rode along one afternoon looking longingly towards the state of our destination, Jesse said, "Boys, in less than an hour we will once more see the sacred dust of dear old Missouri boiling up under our horses' feet."

"I've seen her *boil* before," replied Wood, and I've felt her *baking* sun. If that is any cause for rejoicing, let us give thanks."

"Somehow I feel that we are not going to be disturbed any more if we lay quiet and behave ourselves," said Jesse reflectively, "and this I intend to do till—"

"Some other notion gets into your head?" asked Wood.

"Well, yes. I reckon that's about the size of it, Wood. There's no use to hope when hope has been so foully murdered and—

"And there's no use to grieve over spilt milk," chimed in Wood.

"We've spilt no milk to grieve over," said Jesse with a smile. "That's the other fellow's trouble. I'm not concerning myself over other people's mishaps—look! What's that?"

He pointed to a little cloud of dust in the distance and Wood, taking in the situation, said, "It's that coveted Missouri dust and pretty soon your prophecy will be fulfilled, for it's my opinion that sacred dust will be boiling up under our horses' feet."

We checked rein instantly and kept our eyes on the columns of advancing dust.

"We'll have to beat it," said Jesse. "A bunch of fellows like them don't cross these wastes for nothing."

By this time the riders were in full view and seeing us

wheel and set out at full speed, gave chase and a long run followed. When the pursuers were within about two hundred yards of us they opened fire, though they could have had no notion of who we were except that we were men who did not care to meet up with them. For a full half hour the chase was continued and as the pursuers' horses were fresher than ours, the distance between us began to close up and a fight was inevitable.

On they came, firing as fast as they could load, and when about one hundred yards from us, Jesse ordered a halt to exchange courtesies, and before they could apply the brakes to their nimble steeds, we were not more than fifty yards apart. One poor fellow, unable to check his horse in time, ran right up against his doom and fell not more than ten steps from Jesse's terrible gun—that very gun I now have in my possession.

For a few minutes it was a pretty warm little battle, but after seven of the unlucky fellows had tumbled from their mounts, the others fell back, shooting as they went.

"If we run they will follow," said Jesse; "if we charge them they will beat it out as fast as they came. Load up and get ready."

We were ready in a moment and at the command to "Charge," put spurs to our horses. The sleuths, seeing our determination, wheeled to run and turning, one of them fired at a venture and had the satisfaction of seeing Jesse's pistol fall from his hand. Instantly they checked and notwithstanding the fact Wood and I continued to empty our pistols at them, the entire bunch, eight in number, wheeled again and charged us.

"Jumping to the ground for his pistol, Jesse picked it up with his left hand and dropped one of the pursuers, then mounting his horse, gave orders for a retreat—which meant, of course, a flight. In about fifteen minutes the pursuers tired of their chase and left us with the unobstructed plains before us.

Who these men might have been, we never learned, but one thing we do know, they were pretty plucky fellows and had they been pitted against any force in the world besides Jesse's, there would have been a trio of dead bandits to cart into the nearest town.

CHAPTER IX.

HOLD-UP OF A MISSOURI PACIFIC TRAIN.

It seems a national fad to lay all crimes committed in all the wild borders of the west to the James boys' gang. If a train had been held up on the west coast of California and another in Bangor, Maine, on the self same night, the honors of both would have been given Jesse James.

It seems that the idea must have obtained that Jesse and his bunch were the only free booters in the country capable of laying cross ties on the railroad track and causing the engineer to shut off his throttle. I know positively that there were men in the higher walks of life who participated in these desperate undertakings, then joined a posse to round up poor Jesse and his faithful followers, who were at the time of the hold-up several hundred miles from the scene of the crime. None knew better than they how safe they were in the pursuit of their quarry.

Now, it is not my purpose to pose Jesse as a martyr. He did enough, in all faith, to bring down on his head the opprobrium of all law-abiding citizens. But there were others. Let us render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto the devil his dues.

As a guerrilla, I was a leader, but as an outlaw I was only a follower. There was but one leader, and he fell by the hand of a scoundrel who owed every pound of meat on his accursed bones to the bounty of the man he murdered.

The American continent will never produce Jesse's equal in courage, craft and cunning. He is in a class to himself—yet, look at his fate and let it be a warning to all who cherish in their hearts a desire to emulate his example. "The way of the transgressor is hard—the wages of sin is death." Nothing truer was ever written in any age of the world. You read the history of lawless men written by other men who are outlaws at heart and need only courage to make them outlaws in action.

They picture the delights of the moonlight ride—of the bold hold-ups where everybody cheerfully hands over their valuables. But they fail to tell you that money thus obtained has no value. They do not tell you how, half starved and without food or shelter, the outlaws are often forced

to lay out on the snow covered ground, suffering all the miseries of sleet and rain, while in their pockets they have enough ill gotten gain to quarter themselves in the most luxurious hotels in the land. No, my boy, the bandit's life is one long season of misery, interspersed only now and then with moments of gladness. They do not tell you that their lives are one great Sahara with billows of shifting sand all about and beneath them, and that the beautiful oases just ahead are but mirages that melt away as you trek ever onward.

The cheap writer of cheaper fiction tells you of the rich hauls the outlaw makes from time to time, but he does not tell you that you cannot lay your hand on the body of this prowling gentry without touching a scar that possibly represents years of suffering. Take it, my boy, from one who learned his sad lesson in the school of experience, there is nothing in the life of an outlaw but nerve racking anxiety. You could not choose a more unprofitable career; for what you gain in a tragic day at the risk of your life, you lose in a night of debauching at the cost of your soul.

Cut it out, lads, cut it out! There's little but misery in the lives of "The Gallant Knights of the Rail."

But—back to the records.

Another of those reckless enterprises that have been accredited to us was the hold-up of a train on the Missouri Pacific, not many miles from Sedalia. The versatile historian unhesitatingly pronounces this one of our most daring exploits, yet, from all the evidence I have been able to obtain, there was no marked difference between it and the others.

Nevertheless, I will proceed with my account of this memorable hold-up. It was about 8:30 when the bold adventurers crossed the iron bridge over the Osage and approached the bridge watchman, who is said to have been a Dutchman, which testimony is pretty strongly corroborated by the gentleman's manner of speech.

"Good evening," said Jesse James pleasantly to the lonesome Teuton.

"Good efenink, gentlemen," replied the watchman, equally affably.

"What you doing out here alone?" asked Jesse.

"Vatching dot pridge der rifer across."

"That all you got to do?"

"Maybe so, perhaps, und dots a blenty."

"Looks to me like a mighty light job. With nothing to do but sit here and watch the trains go by."

"Dot's it, und I also vatches so der train don't vud co py. Mit a vave of dot white lantern I say, 'Co py,' under mid a vave of dre ret vun I say, 'Petter of you straight away stop alreaty.'"

"When is your next train due?"

"Zane minuten nach zane der passenger comes along."

"What?"

"Zane minuten nach zane."

"If she runs on such a schedule as that," said Jesse in evident bewilderment, "she's liable not to come in till next year."

"He means ten minutes of ten, or ten minutes after ten, I don't know which," replied one of the boys, who had acquired a smattering of the dialect from a German Jew pawn-broker in Kansas City where he transacted a great deal of his business from time to time.

"Which do you mean?" asked Jesse, "before ten or after ten?"

"Nach zane," demurely replied the watchman, not in the least perturbed.

"I hope you are right about it," said Jesse with a chuckle.

"You co py Sedalia yet?" asked the guard as he puffed a big volume of villainous smelling smoke from his great fat jaws.

"Yes, we want to go to Sedalia," replied Jesse, and we want you to flag her down for us."

The Teuton shook his head.

"Why not?" asked the bandit chieftain pleasantly.

"Dot's der fast express und she makes no vayside stops."

"She'll stop if you flag her down, won't she?"

"Ya, but I don't vud do it alreaty."

"Now come, be a good fellow," said Jesse coaxingly, "take this dollar and be a sport."

"Dunner und blitzens!" yelled the Dutchman, indignantly, "you vould pribe me mit a tollar? Better of you get ouedt." and he turned to walk away.

The watchman turned and found himself looking down into the cold cylinder of a murderous looking pistol.

"Gott in Himmel!" yelled the terrified guard. "You don't vould shoot me for dot, aindt it?"

"No, not for anything you've done, you old bonehead. Now, you grab that red lantern and as soon as the headlight shows up, you go out there in the middle of the track and flag her down, and mind you, Dutchy, you stand right there in the middle of the track till she stops. If you bungle the job there's a dead Dutchman right here. You catch the point?"

In terror for his life the Dutchman grabbed the red light and began waving it before there was sight or sound of the train anywhere.

"Here, come on back here with that lantern, you boob, and wait till I tell you to move it."

The old man sat the lantern down, getting a notion in his head that Jesse might be one of the officials, and said, "Maype so you vas one of der officers."

"No," replied Jesse curtly, "I'm an outlaw, a robber and an all round bad fellow, and I'm going to rob that train. Now is that plain enough for that thick skull of yours?"

"Vat! You a robber?" exclaimed the old fellow, his big eyes protruding like a rabbit's.

"Yes, I'm a robber and this is one of my busy days."

The Dutchman gave a groan, then turning appealingly to Jesse, said, "You don't vould rob me alreaty, aindt it?"

"What you got?" asked Jesse humorously.

"Ein tollar und dreisig cents," replied the Dutchman, holding it out to the robber.

Jesse stretched forth his hand, but instead of taking the pittance, dropped a five dollar gold piece into the outstretched palm.

"Grab your lantern," commanded Jesse sternly. "I hear her coming."

The Dutchman grabbed the lantern and as soon as the headlight peeped above the prairie knoll, jumped into the middle of the track and began a most furious gyration with the red light.

Instantly Jesse grabbed him to make him withhold the signal till the train was only half a mile away. Then he

ordered the old fellow to pull off his part in the deal, which he readily did.

The engine gave a couple of short toots, then shut off steam, and the next minute she was standing in the midst of her captors.

Instantly the engineer and fireman were placed *under arrest*, then two of the bandits entered the express car and demanded the keys of the young and sole occupant of the car.

"I have no keys," said the young man calmly.

"What! You the messenger and have no keys. Dig 'em up or say your prayers at once," said the unwelcome visitor.

"I have no keys. I can't get them. The messenger has them."

"Then you are not the messenger?"

"No."

"Where is he?"

"Search me."

"Say, young fellow, do you value your life?" demanded the bandit, ramming a 44 under his nose.

"Who, me? Me value my life? Well, you just bet I do."

"Then fetch in that messenger at once or you are a dead one. You get that?"

"See here, pardner," retorted the young man, "that messenger saw you flagging the train down three or four miles back. He smelt a rat and hiked out. He's somers in the coaches behind, but I couldn't haul him up here with a yoke of oxen. If you want me to go with you to locate him, say the word and I'm with you."

"Come," said the outlaw, "and no monkey business, either. Show me the right man or *else*."

They hurried through the train, where the passengers were all standing with hands up as if receiving the benediction, and the two recent acquaintances hurried through the aisle and entered the next car, which was in the same attitude. At the rear end of the car they found the trembling messenger, who forthwith declared he did not have the keys—that one of the safes was a through shipment of the United States Express Company and the other belonged to the Adams Company.

"They belong to neither, said the desperate man. "They

are my property and I want the keys. Get them right now or off goes your head."

"Hold, mister," said the messenger, "I gave the keys to the flagman. Honest I did."

"Then produce the flagman and be quick about it."

The messenger led the way into the sleeper and after a short search the flagman was located in the gentlemen's apartment. Without hesitation he pulled off a shoe and out rolled the keys.

In a few minutes the treasure filled safes were opened and the contents were literally raked into a gunny sack without any knowledge of what it might be.

Then passing out the sack to two others on the outside awaiting it, they jumped from the car, hurried across the bridge, mounted their horses and rode leisurely away.

The hold-up was the work of one hour and ten minutes, and in all that time but one shot was fired and that by a young jelly bean of a lad who undoubtedly had read of some brave urchin frightening away a band of robbers and the next day was made president of the company he so heroically defended and lived happy ever after.

As Mark Twain (another illustrious Missourian) would say, "He had been beguiled by the books."

As soon as that inoffensive shot rang out on the air, the bandit at whom it was aimed yelled out, "Put up that pop-gun, you little devil, before you hurt somebody."

But all undaunted, he stood his ground like a Cassabianchi and was in the act of shooting again when a lump of coal thrown by the *bad man* outside hit him amidship. With a wild yell, he dropped the little watchfob of a gun and hurried back into the coach, and I have no doubt he thought he had been blown to atoms by a six-pounder.

It was a pity to thus humiliate the young fellow after pulling off such a spectacular stunt for the edification of his fellow passengers, but the comedy of it afforded us amusement for many a day.

I don't imagine he got to be president of that road or anything else more imposing than president of a tennis club.

In this hold-up we were said to have gotten fifteen thousand dollars and no one was the loser of a single thing ex-

cept the express company, who was amply able to shoulder the loss.

Before daylight the next morning the head hunters were in the saddle and by the next afternoon every citizen of the section was a walking arsenal.

Men who could not hit a flock of balloons with a blunderbuss nor ride a horse without holding on to the saddle with both hands were weighted down with artillery, most of which was incapable of hitting a barn wall, fired from the inside.

Posses were organized and over them were placed men who had smelt gun powder and were not afraid to smell it again at close range. A Mister or a Major Montgomery, of Sedalia, and the sheriff of Pettis county headed two posses from their settlement, while every sheriff from there to Benton county on the Osage had his gang of *extremely* rough riders and the country was scoured for miles around. In the course of their search the inebriated "head hunters" bagged a lot of innocent country gawks who had not so much as heard of the crime with which they were charged, and were subjected to the most brutal treatment to extort a confession from them. But their work was not in vain, for about three weeks after they had started out on the rumpage they overhauled a saphead by the name of Pitts, alias Chas. Wells, who had in his blue jeans a roll of currency amounting to more than fifteen hundred dollars, and as the funds did not seem to be in keeping with the general appearance of the gentleman, they took him in hand, but an hour later he made his escape while the ground beneath his feet was fairly subsoiled with bullets and the trees overhead riddled with the harmless missiles.

Still undaunted, the head hunters kept bravely at their task and the next day bagged a fellow by the name of Kerry—that is, he said it was his name, and as he could not give a satisfactory account of himself, they started off to jail with him, and as they traveled on towards the lock-up he told the officers he did not care at first to give an account of himself for fear they would want to go to his home for proof, which would very much humiliate his new-made wife, but since things had assumed such a threatening attitude, he would like to be taken home, where he

could prove by his wife and her people that he was in Warsaw when the crime was committed.

"Tell it to the judge," said the leader, and would listen to no more of his pleadings.

As soon as he was landed in jail and the news had gone abroad to that effect, one Mrs. Lillie Beamer, a widow of several years' standing, hurried to the officers and told her pitiful story, which is about as follows:

"That wretch was engaged to be married to me and here he has gone and married. The brute! You've got the right party. He was one of the robbers. He hurried on to me to let me know what a profitable night's business he had had and we were to have been married the next week."

"Did he give you any money?" asked the officer.

"Yes."

"How much?"

"Now, Mr. Officer, that's my business, but whatever he gave me is mine and not his'n."

"Yes, madam, but if you accepted that money, it makes you a party to the crime and you are liable to indictment."

"He never gave me no money that night," quickly replied the quick-witted woman. "He gave me ten dollars onct and at another time, five."

"And is that all?"

"Want that a plenty and us not married?" asked the lady.

The officer agreed that it was and because of her invaluable testimony he made no further inquiry into her's and Kerry's relations.

It was learned afterwards that the lady had more than three thousand dollars of Kerry's money in her possession, which no doubt she thought was a liberal breach of promise offering.

This should be a lesson to all young men and a great incentive to heed the admonitions of the Paternal Weller when he said to his son Sam, "Samivle, bevare of the vider."

When Kerry realized the jig was up with him, it is said he made a full confession and handed in to the officers of the law the names of all who participated in the hold-up, and the names he gave being a matter of public record, I do not hesitate to submit them herewith: Jesse James, Bob Younger, Clell Miller, Bill Chadwell, Pitts, himself and one

of my aliases. Though I wouldn't believe such a man on oath, would you?

But the information proved of no service to the officer, for none of the accused were ever apprehended on this charge.



My Nephew—KIT DALTON McCawley.

CHAPTER X.

When we were out of harm's way, we went into retirement in Texas awaiting Jesse's recovery from the broken arm, and for three months led a sedentary existence, going from one post to another where we had friends, but never imposing on anyone. This, we never did in all our career. It mattered not how we acquired our funds, the bread we ate was honest bread, for it was paid for; and we always paid a liberal price for our raiment. We never haggled over pennies. I've seen Jesse spend his last dollar like a prince, nor seem to concern himself about where the next one was to come from. I have seen him borrow from a friend to give to the needy and in turn *extort a loan* from the enemy to repay his friend; and here I will take occasion to state that if any of the boys ever molested a man whose sympathies were with the south, I have no knowledge of it. I know I did not. On one occasion I remember very well that after we had pulled off a stunt and taken away the personal belongings of the passengers, an old man who had *loaned* Jesse three hundred dollars thrust his head out of the car window and said, "Boys, you have handled an old comrade pretty tough."

"Are you a southern man?" asked Jesse.

"Yes, and I got this empty sleeve under Pickett at Gettysburg."

Sure enough, he had only one arm, which Jesse had not noticed.

"Here, comrade," said Jesse, hurrying up to the car window. "Reach out your hand. I don't want it."

Instantly his hand was out the window and a great roll of money was in it. Jesse said afterwards, more than he had relieved the old fellow of.

"God bless you, my boy," exclaimed the old gentleman, in the gladness of his soul, "It's the last dollar I had."

"Need any more?" asked Jesse.

"Thank you, my boy, no more. When you quit this kind of business you'll be one of our greatest men."

Jesse told me afterwards that he had some misgivings about taking the old gentleman's wad, as he looked Dixie

all over and that he felt a good deal easier in mind after having restored it.

After Jesse's recovery we went into Louisiana, where we hoped we might buy a small farm for each of us and settle down to the quiet and prosaic life, and I can assure you our intentions were good—but our ability to do so was not.

We were not in Louisiana many weeks when others of our associates showed up and one of them hearing of a horse race that was to be pulled off, persuaded us to join him and go to the races, where he said he intended to enter his horse, which was one of the best winded and swiftest running animals I have ever seen wear a saddle.

Well, we listened to the siren's voice, having no wax wherewith to stop our ears, and when the morning of the race came round that notable animal was in the paddock.

He was listed for the third race, but no circus clad jockey was to ride him. This would be the job of the owner.

A great wager was placed and many side bets were made—all odds being against our friend's horse.

Great excitement prevailed because of the size of the wager and the rooters got noisy. But our friend rode quietly up to the starting point, his long legs reaching below the animal's body. Contrasted with the spangled jockeys, he did certainly present a most comical appearance, which elicited a world of derision.

The signal was given and the horses were off. From the very start our friend's horse got in the lead, but this caused little excitement, for the professionals were waiting the home stretch. On went the ponies at furious speed, some gaining, some falling back. The last stretch came and the favorite was gaining at every leap. The amphitheatre was a raging tempest of excited yells and waving hats. Women were wildly flaunting their handkerchiefs and shrieking with excitement. Our friend glanced behind and saw a noble bay leaning to it with his nose on a line with his ears. At every step he was closing up the little gap between him and his leader. It was now the time for action. With a gentle call for all his reserve force, our lanky friend leaned further forward; his horse knew the crucial moment was at hand. He had not thrown himself into *flying speed*. Instantly the highest gear was coupled with the pinion and

the noble animal's hind feet threw clouds of dust into the face of his running mate and with every convulsion was rapidly widening the gap. Fifty feet more and the race was his. A lull had fallen over the grand stand. A stillness like the hush of death. Defeat was the favorite's luckless fate. The wire was only ten jumps ahead when all of a sudden two youths sprang before the rushing horse with great red banners and frightened him from the course. At the opposite side of the track our friend reined his horse in and came cantering towards the grand stand, which was a furore seldom witnessed on a race track. The favorite had won.

Riding up to the grand stand, our friend registered a vigorous protest against such trickery and was rewarded by jibes, not only from the amphitheatre, but by the judges themselves.

"Cut it out," cried one of the judges. "You have lost. Take your medicine like a man."

"It's an outrage," said our friend, and we knew the tempest that was boiling in his breast and prepared ourselves for emergencies.

"Do you, sir, think I am going to stand for an outrage like that?" asked our friend, trying to stifle the earthquake, which we knew only too well would break out if justice were not done and that right speedily.

"Say, clear out from this," yelled the insulted judge, "before I have you pinched."

"But, justice, man; justice is all I want," yelled the injured gentleman.

"You'll get that and a d— sight more if you open your head again," said the very bellicose judge.

"Hand my money here, you d— vampire, or by the eternals I'll blow your infernal brains out," shrieked our friend between his teeth, and as he said it his great gun was in his hand. Before he could shoot, however, one of the other judges cracked down on him, but he didn't live to pull his trigger the second time. The ball now opened in good earnest. The other judges were ready for business. Three to one was not fair. We could not see our friend so foully dealt with and in a few minutes the three judges lay dead, surrounded by their stacks of money. It was but the work

of a minute for one of the nimblest of our boys to mount the judge's stand and collect back the stolen money with compound interest, then rushing to our horses, we mounted them before the astonished spectators could recover from their shock and there was another derby to be won and the decision would not lay in any perverted judges, either.

We made a clean-cut getaway without the slightest injury to ourselves or horses and we returned no more to our former stopping place, but headed north for Mississippi.

It has been said and incorporated into a proverb, that ignorance is bliss. Maybe it is sometimes. But at other times it brings about fatal complications.

Ignorance killed those dishonest judges, for had they known the name of the man they had so flagrantly robbed of a justly earned wager, they might have been living today to deal out *justice* in less hazardous cases.

Three weeks following this unfortunate incident we were in Clarksdale, Mississippi, visiting relatives of the James boys, who received us most cordially and caused us to meet a Mr. Bobo, a famous bear hunter, who gave us the glad hand of welcome and arranged a bear hunt in our honor.

It was our first experience in that kind of sport and though we enjoyed listening to the yelping pack, there was little fun in trying to keep up with it through the terrible forests of canes and bamboo. We were scouts of many years' experience, but we had never encountered a Mississippi jungle before, and I will never tackle one of them again unless that were the sentence passed on me by the authorities for some of my misdeeds of the long ago.

In the chase we rounded up one bear—that is, Mr. Bobo and the dogs did, for not a bear in all Mississippi jungle-land could get through one of those almost impenetrable canebrakes easier and with less damage to himself than our honorable host.

When the bear was brought to bay behind an upturned tree root, the dogs were crowding in on him, and I have no doubt but for Mr. Bobo's interference would have made quick work of him. But he had taken us out for the chase and wanted one of us to have the pleasure of bagging the little black rascal. The lot fell to Wood, who dispatched him with one shot from his big pistol.

This was enough for us. The honor of killing one bear was enough for all three of us.

I have been told that Mr. Bobo or his descendants still live in that settlement and that a few years ago they were of the Roosevelt party bear hunting over those same grounds. If these records should fall into their hands, it will more than likely be a surprise to them to know how cordially they entertained a band of outlaws, for we were gentlemen and making no attempt to ply our vocation. If any of this illustrious family are still among the living, I send them greetings.

CHAPTER XI.

ONCE MORE IN TENNESSEE. FATAL LOG ROLLING. BACK TO MISSOURI.

Leaving Mississippi, where we had spent one of our most delightful vacations, we went again into Tennessee, and scattered out among friends who knew our record and were not ashamed to give us the glad hand. While there I met up with my old friends, Bethune and Emerson, who eagerly joined me in a visit to my dear old mother, who was then living in a neat and comfortable home which I had paid for out of funds I had cajoled the enemy into delivering into my hands. They had driven her from a good home and burned it to the ground. It was nothing but justice that they supply the funds to build her another—and they did it.

You may be sure the neighbors had read the papers and were pretty well posted on all the western exploits that were accredited to us, and accepting them all as true, were filled with wonderment and admiration. What would have brought down on our heads the maledictions of the north brought us the benedictions of our own people.

While Bethune, Emerson and I were at my mother's home, we received an invitation to a log rolling in a nearby neighbor's deadening, and as these functions were invariably followed by a dance, we readily accepted and were on the grounds among the first arrivals.

The work was a little strenuous to one who had not turned his hands to such matters for so long a time, but it was enjoyable enough, though I had my knuckles mashed in the ground several times by young huskies who appreciated their victory over me and my small stature as much as they would have enjoyed a victory over Goliath.

It was a merry morning and the songs of merry men in the field were answered by happy birds in the woodland. It was a gala day for the young sandows, for there were several belles in the field watching the exhibition of the manly qualities—possibly for *sinister* purposes, who knows?

We had been in the field about three hours when a little maiden, whose name I will not call, came up close to me and whispered, "Kit, the Williamson boys are coming across

the field and you know they have sworn they would kill you at sight. See, they have their guns. They were not invited to this log rolling and have no right here, but I guess it would be best for you to clear out, for I have heard you say you hoped they would not force you to kill them." "I don't want to show the white feather, little gal," said I, "but I'd rather show a whole bunch of white feathers than turn this field into a battle ground. You know I'm not afraid of them, but I am afraid of myself, for if they make a pass at me I don't intend to mince matters with them at all."

"But you must leave, Kit. They could kill you and officers of the law would applaud it, but if you kill either of them you'll have to skip out again, for you know you are in no fix to go to trial, even though every one in the field should testify in your behalf."

"Your head's level, little gal," said I, "and I'll hike out."

Then leaving her, I walked across the field to where my horse was hitched in the woods, but I had not gone far when I heard someone sing out, "Hay, Kit, watch out!"

As I wheeled I saw one of the miscreants running for shelter behind a tree and from this redoubt sent a bullet after me with his old squirrel rifle. When the smoke had blown away I could see him ramming another ball into his rifle and in his excitement he let his right shoulder get out of line with the tree and the next second a forty-five crashed through it. A lusty howl went *up* and he went *down*, piteously begging me not to shoot any more.

"Watch out, Kit!" came again the same warning voice. As I wheeled to see what danger threatened me this time I saw a puff of smoke boil up from a log heap, which by strange coincidence I had unconsciously with my own hands helped to erect as a fortification for my would-be assassin.

Having no desire to remain in the open as an animated though inoffensive target, I hastened around where I could get a crack at the scoundrel, and at the sound of my pistol another howl went up and more supplications for mercy.

I had broken his leg, which was my intention, and if that didn't suffice, as a matter of course I would have to finish him up. But it was a plenty.

Walking up to the prostrate man, I asked why he and his brother had sought to assassinate me.

By this time fifteen or twenty men had gathered around him, and though wounded as he was, he grew exceedingly brave and said, "'Cause your company of guerrillas kilt my second cousin in Blaylock's house. That's what; and if this old gun had been wuth a durn, I'd a drapped you in your tracks, too."

By this time the other brother was brought up and I assisted the men in placing the rascals in a wagon to be conveyed to their homes.

To my surprise none of the women screamed or fainted. They had become inured to such things and only looked on the incident as a regrettable affair.

"News travels pretty fast in this section, Kit," said one of the ladies, "and though we all know you were justifiable, you can't face a trial. So you'd better get away as soon as possible."

I realized the wisdom of the advice and all gathered around me to say good-bye and wish me a safe trip to the west.

I am told both the Williamson boys got well, though one of them carried an empty sleeve ever after, and as Davy Crockett would say, "The other one wore a timber toe."

The way of the transgressor is certainly hard. Now, I do not regret my actions with respect to these fellows, but I did hate like everything to be cheated out of the dance. I don't know if it were postponed out of courtesy to the wounded men or not.

CHAPTER XII.

SOMEWHAT OF A ROMANCE. ESCAPE FROM A SHERIFF AND HIS POSSE.

When I got back on the old stamping grounds in Missouri, I visited a Mr. Peevyhouse, one of my former associates under Quantrell, and while there received an invitation to a big barbecue which was followed by a barn dance. I thought as I had earned some pleasant divertisement back in Kentucky and was so ingloriously cheated out of it, that this one must have been foredained for my special pleasure and I very willingly mounted my horse on the appointed morning and rode over to the scene of festivities.

The barbecue was a success throughout, as no speeches were made and nothing transpired to put an impediment in the way of a general good time, but as soon as the barbecue was over, a pretty heavy rainstorm came up, which precluded the possibilities of the proposed dance; but the boys were resourceful and bundling up into their traps, drove over to a nearby school house that had a large vacant hall overhead and here the revellers made merry to their hearts' content. I don't know that this dance would have been so indelibly impressive on my memory but for my fortunate meeting with a little lady by the name of Katie, whose other name I cannot give, because at this very time her father was sheriff of that bailiwick.

I have to own up that I was completely captivated by this little lassie and she was not altogether indifferent to my importunings.

When the fourth dance was called I asked her company in the whirl, which was very promptly declined for reasons altogether flattering to me. "I don't want to dance," she said, "and I don't want you to. I want to talk to you."

This was rather unusual and filled me with a keen desire to gratify her simple wishes. We didn't dance. We had not been talking long when to my surprise she asked:

"How long will you be in this settlement?"

"I don't know," I replied. "It depends largely on circumstances."

"I like you," she said blandly, "and wish you would stay a long time."

"I would if I could see you often," I gallantly replied.

"Well, can't you?"

"If you will let me."

"I would be glad to know you better."

"No, little girl, possibly you wouldn't care to have me call if you knew me better," I said, rather reflectively.

"Why? You come to the west to lose yourself?"

"You have hit the nail on the head, little gal." I replied.

"Is that so?" she said, rather thoughtfully.

"Yes, its sadly true and truly sad."

"Then, I don't know you by your real name, do I?"

"No. My name must be a secret in this settlement for a while longer."

"Why, are you one of Quantrell's guerrillas?"

"Yes, and something even worse than that."

"Not one of the James boys' bang."

"Don't you think you are pinning me down rather hard?" I asked, hoping she would shift the subject.

"No, I don't. Didn't I tell you I liked you?"

"But could you like one of the James boys' gang?"

"I like you."

"Yes, and that imboldens me to observe that you've about got me *going*. I could like you a whole lot if you would let me."

"Well, won't I?"

"But suppose I'm one of the James boys' gang, then what?"

"I could like you just the same."

"But tell me pray, why you have suspected me of being one of Quantrell's men or a member of that notorious band of outlaws?"

"Because of your alertness, I guess, and the quick and penetrating glance of your fiery eyes. I thought an outlaw ought to look that way."

"I hope this intuition is not an inheritance," I replied, "for if your father were of the same opinion, it would fare pretty hard with me."

"Yes, if father suspected you, he'd arrest you—at least,

he would make the attempt, but if you men are as fierce as you are pictured, he'd have a pretty tough time of it."

"No he wouldn't," I said. "He would have the greatest advantage over me a human being has ever had in the world."

"What advantage, I'd like to know?"

"Because he's your father," I replied, dramatically.

"And would you submit to arrest rather than do him injury?"

"I feel right now like I would, but somehow or other that word arrest never did appeal to my fancy and many a poor fellow has regretted speaking it in my presence. But I tell you plainly I would not hurt your father. Now run on and tell him you have captured one of the James boys' gang."

"If you think I am a Delilah, there is no excuse for you to pose as a Sampson. If that is your opinion of me, why don't you leave me and hunt up some other girl?"

"There is not another girl here—at least, not to me," I said, sentimentally.

"But you don't mean it," she said, and her questioning eyes looked for a soft answer. She was not disappointed.

"You are a sweet innocent little gal," I said, as I slyly slipped her little hand within my own, then continued, "You are not in the habit of associating with bad men. You don't know outlaw ethics, or you would not doubt my word. Outlaws rob banks, hold up trains and kill whoever may seek to thwart their undertaking, but they do not lie. The James boys' gang is above such a petty vice."

"But you have only answered my questions by asking others. You have told me nothing of yourself and yet you say you like me."

"I would tell you anything that you ought to know, little gal, but you don't really want to know who I am—for I warn you that I'm not a superintendent of a Sunday school."

"I can well imagine that, but who are you? Let me be judge as to whether you are so bad or not. I'll be an impartial judge."

"I wouldn't want an impartial judge to sit on my case," I replied.

"You don't want justice, then?"

"No, anything else."

"Then I'll temper justice with mercy."

"Which means that right here and now I commit my life and liberty to your hands."

"Your secrets would be safe with me and it would be such a novelty. Women don't love men because they are good, but because they dare do things."

"Now, listen, little girl, and hear a name that has not fallen from my lips in seven long years. My name is Kit Dalton and I am a member of the James boys' gang. Now, you know all and I am not sorry I told you."

I was expecting something like an exclamation of horror at the confession, but nothing of the sort. She merely gave me a most bewitching smile and said, "I'm glad you told me and I like you the better for it, for you would not have confided such a secret to me if you did not like me."

Well, as this is a history and not a novel, I will hasten on to the tragic end.

I have never regretted the faith I placed in that dear little girl, for shortly afterwards it proved my temporal salvation.

A few days following our first interview I passed by the lady's home and not seeing her in the house or the yard, gave a signal which had been prearranged and in an instant she was flying out of a side door to meet me at the gate. She realized how unwise it would be for me to come in and for this reason, chatted me over the fence. We had another of those love lorn twaddles and when I left her I told her where I would spend the night nearby in order that I might see her again before being forced to quit the settlement.

With that I left her and soon afterwards met up with an old friend and ex-guerrilla by the name of Coleman.

As we rode along chatting pleasantly of current things, we met up with a tough-looking guy who had all the earmarks of a Kansas Red Leg and as we passed him I caught his eye boring into my very bones. Instantly I checked rein and said to the gentleman, "I hope you will know me the next time we meet."

To which he replied, "I've seen you before, young fellow."

"Well, are you satisfied with my general get-up?"

"I haint meddlin' with nobody," he replied, then wheeled and rode away.

"Well, what do you make of it?" asked Coleman when he was batting it out down the road.

"I rather suspect he's one of the Lawrence survivors and that he will lose no time getting to an officer with his information."

For another mile Coleman and I rode on discussing an attempt by the officers to capture me, then bidding him good-bye, rode on to the home of another old friend, a Mr. Stamps, where I had originally planned to spend the night.

Half a mile from the place of my destination I forded the Kaw river, which was no more than knee deep to my horse, and a few minutes later was enjoying the hospitality of this good old friend.

After supper we sat out on the piazza talking of the good old times when Quantrell so often lead us to glory and always to victory, and having a love feast generally, when the winds began to whistle through the cedars and the lightning to flicker behind the great trees in the valley of the Kaw.

"She looks like she's pretty much in earnest," remarked my host.

"Yes," said I, "we are pretty apt to have a storm."

The winds rose higher, the lightning's flashes came thicker and faster and the thunder sounded like heavy artillery in action, then the flood gates were opened and the rain came down in torrents. In a few minutes the rain drove us in and I remarked to Mr. Stamps as we pulled in our chairs, "How thankful you ought to be for a good home, good health, good neighbors and a happy family."

"Yes," he said, "and I am thankful. I was just thinking how many terrible nights we spent on the scout with no shelter but the black clouds above us and how the good Lord had pulled me safely through it all and allowed me to settle down to a quiet life and raise up a family. I'm thankful, Captain, and I ought to be. Just think of anyone being out in such weather as this. Why, I don't see how the beasts and varmin could live through it. Just

listen to that, wasn't it a whopper, and I bet she got one of my best board trees. I certainly feel for anything caught out in this storm, but come and let's go to bed, she's done her worst, I think, and it will be a mighty fine night for sleeping."

I had no more than hit the bed when I was fast asleep. How long I slept I do not know, but in the quick flashes of a dream I clearly saw Miss Katie struggling in the roaring torrent of the Kaw, but the dream came to an abrupt end when I distinctly heard the signal we had agreed on sound directly in front of the gate.

Instantly I was at the window answering the signal. It sounded again and I thrust my head out of the window and said softly, "Be there in a minute."

The work of dressing occupied about three-quarters of a minute and before the minute was ended I was at the gate.

"What on earth brings you out at such an hour and in such a storm?" I eagerly asked.

"Oh, it is terrible, terrible. The officers are on your trail. I know you will think I have betrayed you, but—"

"I think nothing of the sort, you dear brave soul. I know how it all happened. We met the gent this afternoon that spread the glad tidings."

"You must get away at once, for when they fail to find you at Mr. Coleman's, they will surely come here, and Oh, Mr. Dalton, my father is leading the posse."

"Don't let that worry you, little gal," I said, coaxingly. "It is his duty to capture me if he can and mine to get away if he can't. I'll look out for that, but how in the name of common sense did you cross the Kaw?"

"Oh, I don't know when I crossed it. All I know is that I have come to save you and if you thank me for it, make haste and get away."

"Do you suppose your father will attempt to cross the river tonight?"

"Yes, he will attempt anything for duty's sake and he will be here about 2 o'clock. For I heard them talking and know their plans. Make haste now and get away."

"And leave you to get back home the best way you can?"

"Yes, I came alone, I can return alone."

"Before God, little gal, you'll never return alone unless your little outlaw friend is among the saints in glory."

She protested vigorously against my going back with her, but to no avail. I would have gone had I known a noose awaited me at the end of my journey.

Hurriedly catching my horse, I rejoined her at the gate, and notwithstanding the sobby roads, the still drizzling rain and the impenetrable darkness, that trip back to Miss Katie's home was one of the most enjoyable rides I have ever taken in all my checkered career.

When we were in a quarter of a mile of the river we could plainly hear the mad waters roaring through the narrow gorge or breaking with a thunderous roar against the ledges on her rock-ribbed banks.

"Listen to that," I said, as we rode through the black gloom, hand in hand, "How did you ever get across?"

"I don't know. I didn't stop to speculate. It was through no heroism on my part, for the credit all belongs to my horse—faithful soul."

"Was it this bad when you crossed?"

"I don't know, but it made a lot of fuss. It's a treacherous little old river and boils over quicker than a coffee pot."

"You must cross this time on my horse," I said, "for he is equal to the strongest current that ever flowed down a river. Yours is not used to it like mine."

"How are you going to cross?" she asked anxiously.

"I'll swim along by your side and hold to a stirrup."

To this arrangement the little lady entered a strong protest, but I considered it the safest plan and as soon as we were come to the bank, transferred her to my horse, and going to her's to trim him up for the plunge, discovered for the first time that she was riding bareback. She assured me this was no uncommon stunt, but on this occasion she did not feel that she had time to saddle him. Having fixed her bridle out of the way of the animal's forefeet, I drove him in and with a mad dash he struck out for the opposite bank. Then came our turn. I tapped my horse with a switch and in he went before I could catch the stirrup, but I managed to grab his tail and plunged into the swirling waters, making myself as little of a burden as possible to the noble beast.

A second more and we were battling for our lives as faithfully as I had ever fought for the same cause in all my troubled career. The horse was doing good work, but I could feel him drifting and hadn't the remotest idea what would happen should he miss the ford. I kept up an encouraging chatter to reassure the little lady, but the dissembling was certainly equal to my best efforts. In a short while I felt the impact of the horse's feet on a rocky ledge and knew we had drifted below the ford. Just what this meant I could not so much as guess. The situation was perilous in the extreme, but calling to mind the many times I had battled for no life but my own, I took new courage, let go the horse's tail and a moment later was standing on the ledge, full three feet under the water. Quickly grabbing the lady's hand, I pulled her to safety and the horse thus lightened of his load, quickly got a footing and a second later was scrambling up the precipitous wall. When we had climbed out of this terrible maelstrom, we found to our unspeakable delight the two horses side by side nibbling grass. Then mounting them, rode on happy in our deliverance.

As we neared the house we could distinctly hear the posse talking and for full five minutes waited to hear their plans. Then we made our way cautiously to the side of the house and taking my dear little deliverer in my arms, I was grateful enough or sentimental enough to press her to my heart in one mad paroxysm of delight. For a moment I felt the heavy beating of a brave heart against my palpitating breast, then with a lingering passionate kiss, we parted forever.

If the little lady be still living, may angels guard her household. If dead, God bless her memory.

CHAPTER XIII.

SHORT STAY IN FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS. BILLY HUGHSTON, McWILLIAMS AND MYSELF CAUGHT IN A DEATH TRAP.

I had been delivered from certain capture or a swift death by the heroism of a brave little woman whose father would not leave a stone unturned in that settlement in his bloodhound search for me. If I remained longer in that county I would have to be his *corpse* or his captive, and I saw no particular reason to invite either alternative. I had promised Miss Katie I would under no circumstances kill her father and another promise equally sacred, that she should never look on me as his captive. I was hers all right, but would never be his.

There was but one way to avoid this and that was to *slope*, which I did in great haste. Leaving that settlement that very stormy night, I headed south, and did not change my course until I had come to Springfield, Mo., where I met up with some of the boys who had been mixed up in the Missouri Pacific hold-up. Two of them were completely busted and wanted to open up business right away with some bank or some railroad company. I was determined to get out of the state and declined to participate in their project. So there we parted. I also parted with three hundred dollars which I gave the boys as a nest egg, and continued my journey. At Fayetteville, Arkansas, I got a job with a liveryman by the name of Ward, who was a most excellent gentleman and a pretty big dealer in live stock.

It did not take my employer long to appreciate my appraisal of a horse and my salary went up accordingly.

For several months I was his buyer and had the comfort of knowing I was making good money for my employer, who gave me unlimited sway, nor did he stop to inquire the whys and the wherefores of any trade I saw fit to make in his name.

My salary arose from forty dollars for the first month to seventy-five for the second, and I guess it would have gone still higher but for the yelp of a coyote I heard on my trail.

It so happened one afternoon that I had nothing to do and not having seen much of the village in a long time, I strolled about to take an inventory of my surroundings.

When I was in front of one of the leading hotels, I saw a crowd standing on the steps eagerly discussing something of evident importance, and being rather inquisitive on occasions of this kind, I strolled over that way to see what I could hear. Their conversation neither pleased or surprised me, for I had witnessed too many gatherings of that character.

In the course of their conversation I heard a most graphic description of one of my aliases and still being interested in the gentleman they were discussing, by whatever name he might be called, I strolled leisurely towards the stable, and as soon as I was out of their sight hurriedly caught my horse and slipping him out the back way, was ready for another uncertain pilgrimage when I heard a voice call out, "Hey there, young fellow, wait a minute; I want to see you."

"That's just the reason I am hurrying away," I said as I dashed off at full speed. Several bullets whistled by me as I made my getaway. I am glad to state that I left my employer a few dollars in my debt instead of being in his, and I have no desire to collect the amount.

Should this book fall into Mr. Ward's hands, it will be the first direct information he has had of my whereabouts since I left him so unceremoniously more than a quarter of a century ago.

In Aurora, Missouri, I met up with Billy Houghston and McWilliams, two impecunious gentlemen who were willing to live within their own means or anybody else's.

Without any definite purpose in view, we started for Southwest Missouri. After an all night's ride through a downpour of rain and over heavy roads, we came to a humble farm house about 8 o'clock in the morning, and being thoroughly saturated with Missouri weather, which had chilled us to the bone, and hungry to the point of desperation, we asked for breakfast for ourselves and horses, and were readily accommodated.

Our host looked after the horses while his good wife prepared our breakfast. In a little while the savory odor of

fried bacon and aromatic coffee came floating into the family room from the "lean-to," which gave a keener edge to our internal anxiety and brought us to a realization of the fact that we were really human beings, and the merry prattle of little children bringing back the recollection of a life that had passed away, led me to believe that I might be domesticated by gentle treatment and made to eat out of civilization's hand if the other hand did not hold a club.

"Breakfast is ready, gentlemen," said the housewife, who was also cook and head waiter, and a moment later we were as busy as a pack of wolves over their recent kill.

Half an hour later we felt happy once more and at peace with all mankind. But the next moment happy dreams turned into a nightmare.

As we sat beside the table taking a farewell sip of coffee, I saw a hat dart by the window, and I had every reason to believe that a head was under it, and no friendly head at that.

"We're in for it, boys," I said, jumping up and grabbing my pistol. "Get ready for trouble."

Instantly Houghston and McWilliams were ready for action; the door was slammed to and barred, while the family ran frantically about, beseeching us not to hurt them.

"Keep quiet," I commanded. "We are protecting you."

Looking through a peep-hole between the log walls, I saw the yard filled with every breed and variety of low-commissioned thugs, and knew we were in for a tight pull. "Boys," I said, "this is no lark or child's play. It is a fight to the finish with overwhelming odds against us." Then turning to Houghston, added, "This is a new business to you, my boy, but keep your head clear and your heart cool. If we surrender we will be shot down like dogs. Keep this in mind, and if you value your life, fight for it. It's your only hope."

I had scarcely finished my harangue when an imperious voice from the outside shouted, "I demand your surrender in the name of the law!"

"What! Surrender before we're whipped?" I answered.

"Yes, surrender and save your lead, for you can't escape. We have a hundred men surrounding the house."

"When we get through with you, you will have to take

a new census," I replied, "for we are going to fight it to the death."

"And sacrifice that family?"

"No, not if you are human beings. If you are men instead of devils you will allow them to get out."

"Then send them on, but mind you, if you try to use them as shields, you'll all be killed."

"We are not ready to come out yet. Just give them protection, for they don't even know who we are."

"Send them on," came the curt demand.

Then turning to the old man, I said, "I'm sorry, sir, to have brought this on you. Here's the pay for our fare; take it and hurry on."

"They'll kill us all," said the old man, shivering with fright.

"No, they'll not hurt you. Get out at once."

Gathering up the frightened and bawling children, they rushed out, and when the door closed behind them a hundred guns broke loose, and the old clapboards rattled with their bullets.

We, too, were busy, and whenever we could catch the glimpse of a hat through the cracks, we fired with telling effect.

I realized how desperate—aye, how seemingly hopeless was our condition, and desperation sharpened my eye and steadied my hand. Houghston and McWilliams were not squandering their ammunition, either, as we could tell by the groans and the shrieks that went up at every exposed angle.

"Plunk!" I heard a bullet hit flesh, and a groan followed.

"Who got it?" I asked, not being able to look around.

"Me," said Houghston, with another groan.

"Where?"

"In the laig," he grunted.

"Stand on the other one and keep on shooting," I commanded.

"Plunk!" "Oh, Lord!" and kerplunk he hit the floor.

"Who caught that one?"

"Me," came the same voice. "I'm shot in the other laig."

"Then stand on your head and keep on shooting."

"Plunk!" I didn't have to ask who got that one. "Plunk!" Nor that one, but they only *plunked* me, and I kept on firing whenever I could get a bead.

"Plunk!"

"Ouch!"

"That you, Mc?"

"I think so. Confound his rotten hide!"

"Bang!"

"Oh, Lordy, Lordy, Lordy!" from the outside.

"Ha, ha! I got him, Cap! The same devil that nipped me!"

"I'll give you one more chance to surrender!" sounded amidst the rattle of musketry.

"If you came here to fight, fight. If you came to palava, you have come to a dangerous place," I yelled defiantly.

"Smoke the devils out!" came the sounds of a voice to the west of the house. I had heard that command on several previous occasions and never once saw the mob hesitate to act on the suggestion. When once that order is given or the idea suggested, there's but one alternative—prepare for a getaway. I hastily explained the situation to my companions and told them if they preferred to be set up like tenpins and be shot down, they could surrender, and assured them this was their doom in the event they did surrender.

"Then we will die with you, Captain," they both responded.

"Get that out of your head," I replied. "Make ready to escape with me. I am not going to die. Load all your guns and when I make a break for the outside, follow me. Shoot your shotguns first, then throw them down and use your pistols. Take a quick survey of the situation and shoot those who seem most likely to kill you. This is your only chance of escape."

"This is your last chance to surrender," came the voice of the commander. "If you don't surrender we will burn you up."

Poor fellow, he didn't live to see the torch applied.

A second later a load of hay was aflame at the corner of the house and we knew the jig was up. "Come on boys."

I said, and with this I threw the door open, and with my shotgun dropped a lieutenant who stood half protected by the gate post. Then another fellow from behind the other post stuck his head out to get a crack at me and fell dead just as his gun went off and the shot took a small nip out of my left arm. Throwing my shotgun down, I brought both my heavy pistols into play and before the astonished soldiers could recover from the shock, I was in amongst them, shooting and clubbing my way through. In this I had all the advantage. It was almost impossible for me to discharge my guns in that mix-up without hitting someone and the situation found them in the same deplorable fix. They could not shoot without great danger to themselves, and for this reason withheld their fire and ran frantically in and out among each other yelling, "Kill him! Kill him!"

In less than ten seconds I was on my horse, without bridle or saddle, and the noble animal seeming to appreciate the situation, vaulted the fence in the midst of the demoralized men, trampling under his iron feet any who might be unfortunate enough to be in his path, and a few seconds later was dashing at full speed towards the woods.

It was without doubt the most miraculous escape that could be catalogued in a book of miracles, for in all that time, from the second I sprang from the door until I was fully a quarter of a mile away, not one shot was fired at me. I have never been able to account for this except on the grounds that Houghston and McWilliams were attracting their attention in some unaccountable way and even this does not solve the riddle.

After I was out of the range of their guns they opened up on me, but made no attempt to follow.

Ten minutes later I was safe in the woods and I felt pretty sure they would not venture to swim the creek, as I had done, in order to attempt my capture. If they had I could have gotten shelter behind a tree and killed them to a man, for when green hands are trying to navigate a swollen stream horseback, they have no time for anything else. When I was safe in the woods I halted to look about me for a safe route and to listen to what was going on at the farm house. Through the trees I could see great vol-

umes of smoke rising from the burning building and a few minutes later heard two volleys from the soldiers' murderous guns. Poor boys! They lost their nerve in the last act of the tragic play and sacrificed their lives as the price of their folly. Thus it was, judgment had been overridden by fear with the same fatal consequences.

CHAPTER XIV.

SAM BASS OF INDIANA.

Had we plied our trade with the pertinacity that characterized the minions of the law who chased us, we certainly would have accomplished wonders. It was plain to see that the cordon was tightening around us. Men who would have rejoiced to see us dodge the sleuths looked on the reward with covetous eyes. There was no telling when the pinch of poverty would instill into their hearts a keen desire for the enforcement of the law. There was a pack of sleuths on every trail we had passed over for the last year. It was too dangerous to try the old beaten paths any longer. I had forfeited my right to live in Kentucky, my native state; in Tennessee, I was *persona non grata*; Mississippi had neglected to hang out her sign of "Welcome" to me and I stood self exiled from Arkansas; but Texas, with her innumerable townships of idle lands, made no deep scrutiny into the lives and habits of bodies that were strong, hands that were capable and hearts that were willing. She was willing to take any branch of the human family on probation. I possessed the three cardinal virtues. I was tired of the trail and wanted to work. A dollar honestly earned had more value in my eyes than a hundred acquired by shady methods. In Texas there was no excuse for idle hands. I could throw a lariat, watch the marauding red brother or plow a straight furrow, as the case might require. I would go to Texas, and try my hand at honest labor. It would be a diversion at any rate. Thus I mentally soliloquized and forthwith acted on the soliloquy.

In due time I was in the domain of that vast empire which we are in the habit of calling a state, and once more breathed

the air of perfect freedom. Once more I felt like a human being and once more resolved to live like one if I were permitted to do so. I would conduct myself in a manner becoming a gentleman and win the respect of law-abiding men. These were my mental reservations, but alas, they could not abide. I could not hide my identity any more than a leopard can change his spots. There was not a nook or a corner in all the wide borders of the west where one of my murdered aliases did not rise up to accuse me.

It was near San Antonio I had the misfortune to meet up with Sam Bass, the most desperate and foolhardy buccaneer that ever exchanged a birthright of cold baker's bread for hot home-made biscuits.

Sam was a product of Indiana and as Admiral Semmes would say, "Was driven from his home because of the many dirty deeds 'he hadn't oughter done.'"

At the time I met up with this redoubtable gent, the whole west was ringing with his deeds of devilment and reckless daring. Nothing was too dangerous for Sam to undertake—nothing too despicable for his thrifty hands—as I found out before I had been with him many months, but he was true grit and unquestionably loyal to those whom he chose to call his friends. This, I think, was his only redeeming trait.

On this occasion of our first meeting, Sam was low in funds and was exceedingly anxious to repair the fortune he had acquired by ugly methods and spent in riotous living.

The public stages carried at times vast quantities of money. Sam wanted his *sheer*. The banks also carried heavy deposits. Sam wanted a loan and had nothing to hypothecate but a brace of heavy pistols. He had an idea he could present them at the cashier's window and coax that dignitary into making him a liberal advance. The game had been played in Missouri with more or less success, why not in Texas? Bill Jackson and Joe Collins would endorse for him, after a fashion, and as for that matter, Joe and Bill held themselves in readiness to do anything that the most vivid imagination could not distort into a worthy act.

With such a praiseworthy end in view, Joe and Bill were soon located, and with this bunch of moral misfits, Sam struck out on the trail for funds.

It was in the spring of '74 that the notable stage robbery on the Austin & San Antonio line was pulled off to great advantage to a quartette of desperate gentlemen, commonly called highwaymen. This was a venture of too much magnitude to be accredited to understudies and as a consequence, Frank and Jesse James, Cole Younger, Clell Miller and Arthur McCoy fell joint heirs to the odium.

It is wonderful with what accuracy the sleuths were always able to name every man in every hold-up of that stirring period and how readily the people swallowed any concoction that was offered their credulous minds.

Were it not for the fact that my accurate knowledge of this incident might direct suspicious eyes towards me, I would not hesitate to state positively that none of the above mentioned gentlemen were in the state of Texas at this time.

I was with Sam Bass shortly after this thrilling incident and have every reason to believe the proceeds from the Austin & San Antonio stage robbery were divided into four equal shares—something like this: The dividend being 2,000 and the division 4, the quotient would necessarily be 500, or in better mathematical form, 2,000 divided by 4 equals Sam Bass, Joe Collins, Bill Jackson and a gentleman of small stature lately arrived from Missouri. Two days following this stage hand-out, I was riding through the country in company with these three masculine graces and the day being exceedingly hot, we rode up to a farm house to get a drink of water and to refresh our horses, which were pretty well jaded in consequence of a long forced march, and while at the well, saw a dozen heavily armed men riding in our direction.

As they were not personal friends of ours, there was no use to loiter around there for the purpose of interviewing them.

We had gotten all the liquid refreshments the place afforded and therefore mounted our horses and rode off at a pretty rapid gait. These twelve disciples of the law invited

us to stop, but as we thought of an imperative engagement awaiting us elsewhere and as we were already late, we rode on without even exchanging the greetings of the day. The gentlemen were evidently displeased at our conduct, and to show us how they resented such uncivil conduct, opened fire on us at about two hundred yards distance.

For a full half hour the chase was kept up and the distance between us was widening all the time, when all of a sudden my horse plunged forward to the ground with a broken neck.

The suddenness of the fall precipitated me some several feet in the air, but by lucky chance gravitation pulled me down again, and when I got my soundings I was sitting in the midst of a desert of sand full twenty feet from my dead horse.

However, I managed to show the ill-bred whelps how well I could manage to get along without a horse, and bouncing to my feet I pawed up sand at a furious rate right in behind my companions. Sam, wheeling to fire over his shoulder at our pursuers, saw my predicament and like the true highwayman he was, came galloping back to my assistance, while bullets were whizzing past his head singing their melancholy requiem.

I had no time to mount, but catching his stirrup, swung on, while the noble beast bore us both to safety in a sheltering wood. As soon as we had gotten shelter behind the trees and opened up on our pursuers in a manner indicating our extreme displeasure, what few of them who were left in their saddles wheeled and cut out across the plains, not even waiting to bury their dead.

Our pursuers always reminded me of an irate dog on the inside of a yard. How they do chase up and down the picket fence trying with such desperation to get at a dog on the other side. In their frantic efforts to reach the in-offensive passerby, they conveniently overlook a crack large enough for a bull elephant to crawl through. Thus it was with the posses and sleuths. As long as they had no hopes of catching us they chased with the mad fury of demons, but when once they discovered they were likely to catch us, they fired a few random shots, left a few of their num-

ber dead on the field and went bolting away as though they suddenly concluded we were not the men they sought.

When the human vampires were out of sight I went back to my horse, got my saddle and bridle and returned safe to my companions.

But that was a noble race I ran hanging to Sam's stirrup. I do not believe I exaggerate when I say I spanned twenty-five feet at each stride. Hiawatha's sprinting could not have gotten by that with a very great margin.

When the coast was clear we came out of the woods and two miles further on came to the home of a Mr. Vael, who sold me a first rate plug for eighty dollars. Sam called my horse Napoleon and when I asked him why, he said, "On account of his bony parts." The horse proved a good one notwithstanding his gaunt make-up, but ever after he wore the name of Napoleon.

The following night we pitched camp in Stephenson county on the little Cado, where, secure from all pursuit, we made our rendezvous. Here we stayed in perfect peace and tranquility for a week, and as we were pretty flush, we were free spenders, which proved our salvation not many days afterwards.

By lucky chance there was a wayside store not far from our camp operated by another Mr. Vael, kinsman to the gentleman who had sold me the horse. Vael seemed to be in perfect sympathy with us, and as a token of his appreciation of our liberal patronage, took it on himself to misdirect all posses who were scouring that section for us.

One day he came to us with the information that a posse had just left his store and following his instructions, had gone in the opposite direction, but he felt sure they would return after an hour's search and take up the trail leading to our camp. Quickly getting our effects together, we tipped our informant liberally and hurried on our way further westward. But the way was not altogether open for we were not on the trail more than three hours when we ran into another posse, which manifested a most unfriendly spirit towards us, and opened fire without any preliminaries. We promptly returned it and in the long running fight both sides wasted enough ammunition to stock

a pretty fair sized army and all to no avail, for not a man or a horse was injured, so far as I was able to find out.

Having eluded this posse, we pushed on and came into the Indian nation, where we rested up for a few days, being the guests of our old friend Chief Boudenot.

After we had gotten all the rest we required, we went again into Kansas, and while in that blood bespattered state the train robbery at Mesquite Switch was pulled off.

This was another stunt of the James boys, who absolutely knew no more about this affair than his holiness the pope. Yet they got the credit and were hunted accordingly.

Now, the details of this robbery are about as follows, and I got my data from reliable sources:

Mesquite was a watering station on the Missouri Pacific some distance west of Kansas City. Here the trains invariably took on water, and as it was a place uninhabited save by the tank tender, it offered extra inducements in the way of security from interruption for the knights of the rail.

When the northbound passenger rolled in about eight o'clock and the great pipe was dropped over the tender, the engineer and firemen were placed under arrest according to the highwayman's rules and held in custody by two pretty determined looking gents, while the other two paid their respects to the express car. No resistance was offered and no violence done to anyone. In fact, I have been told that the passengers did not know there was a hold-up until the train was speeding on its way to Kansas City. Yet it was the richest haul by far that the bandits ever scooped in a single enterprise, and the express company was the only loser. However, its losses were heavy enough in all conscience, for without a word of protest the accommodating baggageman turned over to the outlaws sixty thousand dollars in gold, all of the mintage of '73, and when the funds were divided, Sam Bass, Jim and Joe Collins and another gentleman who was a warm personal friend of mine, divided the yellow spoils, and promptly scattered out to avoid pursuit.

When it was known throughout the country what a vast sum the bandits secured, searching parties were inaugu-

rated in every bailiwick and people once more became posses of that *patriotism* which a healthy reward always instills in the hearts of the *lovers of law and order*. It is passing strange how the people will curse out such great corporations as the express and railroad companies, accusing them of every crime in the calendar, then as soon as some *enterprising citizens* deal with these companies according as they have been dealt with, how readily they join affinity with their old-time enemy in an endeavor to restore unto them that which they acquired by usury and lost by the cunning of their victims.

But sympathy and patriotism, like all other perishable commodities, are ever on sale and people who peddle out such wares for a price are by no means in the minority.

Sentiment has not changed much since those days. It is now as it was then, "Get money, no matter how. No questions asked the rich I trow, Steal by night and steal by day, but do it all in a legal way."

Money could then and it can now, buy patriotism, morals, honor, law and the makers thereof. It can pervert justice, suborn witnesses, influence juries, purchase offices, subvert nations or enthrone monarchs. It can imprison innocence or strike the shackles from the manacled legs of guilt. It can burn a saint at the stake or canonize a demon, and its power for good or for evil is the same.

The companies who suffered at the hands of the border outlaws had unlimited means at their command, and with these means never failed to arouse the *suveren* people to a sense of their patriotic duty.

Money can buy whiskey and whiskey turns cowardice into foolhardy daring. I have never known of a posse that was not more plenteously supplied with booze than with guns; and whiskey and guns do not make a safe combination.

So it was that the patriots buckled on their armour and went forth in the name of law and order to capture the outlaws to whom they would willingly have sold their *corporate patrimony* for a mess of the bandit's saffron pottage.

With a rich reward hanging ripe at the successful end of their endeavors, men will dare do anything.

The reward for the capture, dead or alive, of the perpetrators of the Mesquite hold-up was unusually large and competitors unusually plentiful in numbers. Add to this the fact that it was pretty well known that the bandits were well supplied with funds which might by lucky chance fall into the possession of the captor, and it can be readily seen with the naked eye how tempting was the prize they sought.

There was no safe place in Kansas or Missouri for the outlaws. With that sixty thousand dollars in gold of *standard weight and fineness* on their persons, the robbers stood in mortal dread of being *touched* by licensed highwaymen, then operating with such a free hand in those states, and to better husband their desperate earnings, struck out for less dangerous grazing grounds.

But danger was everywhere, as they found to their sorrow. In Texas a posse got in behind four of the culprits, which resulted in a long running fight wherein several of the posse lost their lives in quest of the golden fleece and two of the outlaws were killed. The Messrs. Collins brothers were the unfortunate free booters who met this unhappy fate. Sam Bass escaped. Whatever became of one of those aliases of mine, which was supposed to have been mixed up in this unsavory matter, I have never been able to learn. It is generally believed I escaped, hooked on another sobriquet and went into hiding.

Shortly after the Mesquite affair, Sam and some of his friends went into Round Rock, Texas, for purposes best known to themselves, but when they reached town, found to their dismay this sign on the door of a bank where they proposed transacting some business after the fashion of such men, "Bank Closed."

"What the d— does that mean?" asked Sam of one of his men.

"It means that some old patriarch was born on this date way back yonder in the dim ages," answered his associate.

"Taint the 12th nor the 22d of February," replied Sam, "nor yit the 25th of December. Taint Arbor Day, nor Labor Day, nor the Fourth of July, nor Thanksgivin'. It looks kinder funny to me."

"Well, let's just loaf around town a while and maybe she'll open up," said another of the miscreants.

"Might as well," replied Sam, "and while we're waitin' I want to lay in a supply of cartridges. I may need 'em before I git outer here."

With this Sam and one of his friends walked into a hardware store and called for the little lead-plugged cylinders.

While the clerk was showing Sam his wares, the city marshal came in, and noticing a pretty healthy bulge in the after deck of Sam's jeans, said, "Say, young fellow, ain't you got a gun on you?"

"I certainly have," answered Sam with animation. "Want to see it?"

"No monkey business with me, young fellow, I'm the city marshal," said his lordship. "Hands up."

"Whose hands?" asked Sam innocently, not heeding the command.

"Yourn!" yelled the marshal, and with this he threw his big Colt's in Sam's well dissembling countenance. Quick as a flash Sam's gun was out, a terrible explosion followed and the luckless conservator of the law sank to the floor. This seemed the signal for the general attack and Sam and his friend were forced to club their way through the crowded door. A second later they were in the act of mounting their horses, when Sam gave a groan and sank to the ground. His friend ran to his aid, assisted him to his horse and before the astonished citizens could get possession of their wits, they were beating a hasty retreat, amid a hailstorm of bullets from several hundred guns.

Half a mile out of town the fugitives heard the posse in hot pursuit. Sam, being unable to sit on his horse unassisted, was held to his saddle by his friend, and thus occupied, could not fire on the pursuing hosts. This was unnecessary, however, as they never came in range of their guns and it was plain to see they only wanted the excitement of a chase and not a capture.

For three miles the desperate race was continued, then the posse, fearing to override their mounts, turned and went back to the village. Meanwhile Sam was growing fainter and fainter, leaving it altogether doubtful in the mind of his friend as to whether he was dead or alive.

"Lay me in the first shade, comrade," whispered the dying man, "and you make your escape. You can do me no good. They have killed me and I guess they'll take care of my remains when they find me."

It was all that could be done. It was reasonable to suppose the posse would open another jug of busthead as soon as they reached the village, then reinforce their numbers and come again to the trail, so poor foolhardy Sam was dragged from his horse to a shade and there left to the tender mercies of his slayers.

Sam's friend escaped, but learned afterwards that the posse found him under the tree, laid him tenderly in a wagon and carried him back to Round Rock, where he received the medical attention the best physicians could give, but to no avail. The next day the doctors advised him he only had a few hours allotted to him and wanted to know if he had any antemortem statement to make, to which the dying man replied, "Yes, doctor. Tell the man who killed me to feel no remorse of conscience. I deserve the death I got. I am Sam Bass of Indiana."

"Holy smoke!" yelled the astonished doctor, "can this be true?"

"Yes, doctor, it is true, and the man who killed me can get a rich reward. Tell him Sam Bass congratulates him."

"And who was the little devil who escaped with you, and who were the others who were with you in town before the shooting began?"

"Doctor," said the dying man as he looked up into the astonished face of his physician, "do you think a little thing like death can unnerve a man like Sam Bass? I am not afraid to die. This is the end of Sam Bass, but he carries his own kind of honor to the grave with him. Find out who my companion was if you can. I will never tell you."

Just then there was ushered into the room of the dying man one J. Iscariot by the name of John Murphy, who, looking into the face of the man he had betrayed to his doom, greeted his old companion in these words:

"Well, Sam, old boy, I'm mighty sorry for you."

"Put the lying whelp out," said Sam faintly.

"No you don't, Sam. I used to mind you because I was

afearred of you, but I ain't now. I've turned over a new leaf."

"I told Joe Collins more than a month ago you were a traitor," said Sam, "and I would have killed you then but for Joe's pleading. You'll get yours soon enough, John. You are as deep in the mud as I am in the mire."

"I'm certainly much obleejeed to Joe for puttin' in a word for me," sneered the cowardly Murphy, "and you kin tell him so when you meet him in hell."

"Get out of here, you infamous coward," shrieked the doctor, as he gave Joe a kick in the pit of his bread port-manteau. No one but a coward would taunt a dying man in this manner."

Joe grabbed the aching footprint of the doctor and hurried out.

Sam smiled his appreciation of the doctor's sympathy and extending his trembling hand, said, "Thank you, doctor. Brave men respect a dying foe. Good-bye and God bless you."

Half an hour later poor Sam breathed his last and the watchers said, "Poor fellow, he was game to the last."

Now, the prevailing opinion regarding this fateful affair is well based. Sam had planned to rob the bank at Round Rock and confided his secret to Murphy, who professed to be in sympathy with the venture and offered whatever assistance he might be able to extend in the matter, then like the Judas he was, betrayed him to his death.

On the day set for the robbery, the bank officials having gotten the tip from Murphy, closed the doors of the bank and had about two hundred Texas rangers in the village, waiting to look after the robbers when the attempt should be made. The shooting in the hardware store precipitated action with results as related.

Sam deserved to meet a tragic end, but the man does not live who is so lost to the nobler sentiments of the soul as to respect a renegade who will turn traitor for a price and betray a comrade to his doom.

CHAPTER XV.

GOOD-BYE TO THE OUTLAW DALTON. THE ADVENT OF A NEW LIFE.

If I were with Sam Bass in the Round Rock affair, I must be the only survivor. Joe and Jim Collins met their doom in a manner fitting the lives they had led. Sam was gone the way of the reckless. I alone am living.

I had gone through enough to make me pause and consider. I paused. After the death of Sam, I resolved to earn my living in an honest way if that living were only cold collards and branch water. I could join the rangers and there lend a helping hand to keep myself in check. I would do it.

I joined the rangers and made that body of legal prowlers a valuable scout. Fighting Indians was tame sport alongside of the other reckless acts of my life. There is little danger in an Indian if you see him first. Being a ranger would be quite a commonplace calling. That is what I wanted. As a ranger I cruelly murdered the reckless Dalton and from his funeral pyre sprang Mr. Charles Bell, a very reputable gentleman. Strange to relate, in the metamorphosis the late Kit Dalton et als had undergone very little physical change. Mr. Bell, his successor, was a man five feet eight, with black snappy eyes. He was a good equestrian and a fine shot. He would preserve his honor and defend that of his predecessor only in emergencies.

Mr. Bell was a reputable citizen enjoying the confidence of his associates and the cattlemen's association. He was in every way a moral man. In this he resembled in a measure the late Dalton, for neither of these gentlemen ever took a drink across the bar. Neither of them was a habitue of questionable places. In this respect they had the same clean bill of health.

Captain Dalton had yielded to the temptations of alluring prospects and under the stress of excitement had deported himself in a manner unbecoming a law-abiding citizen. Mr. Chas. Bell had nothing to regret in this respect.

The sleuths had at last lost all trace of the unlamented Dalton and gone back to their kennels. The little friend

of Jesse James was as a pebble in the great desert wastes. He was safe amid the shifting sands. Thus it was that the human vampires lost the trail and gave up the search.

In Texas, as a ranger I felt there was rest from the midnight forays, from the desperate game where human life was a wager against lucre. The long, long marches were at an end and the bitter cold nights on the frozen earth were things of the past.

So farewell, a long farewell to the bloody grapple and the bloody minions of the plains and of the law.

Mr. Bell was safe. I would guard his career and get him to profit by my unlucky experiences.

Mr. Bell was reckoned a worthy scout and had steady employment. He could take to himself a wife and maintain a household.

This new gentleman, whose existence came into the world as suddenly and as unexpectedly as his great grand parent Adam, found himself in the same lonely attitude as this distant kinsman of his. He needed a helpmate. He had read a paragraph somewhere that stated, "It is not well for man to live alone." He also supplemented this thought with the reflection, "And it is not well to wait till some other fellow has cheated him out of the little girl he had ever had in mind to call his wife. He knew her when she was a child and had never ceased to love her, though at times, man like, he lost her image once in a while in the smiles and wiles of other little girls scattered throughout this vast land."

Mr. Bell pondered over this matter and the more he turned it over in his mind, the more his thoughts went back to the mountains of dear old Kentucky, where lived a little maiden whose image never faded from his mind, even in the most trying circumstances. From a miniature daguerreotype, the image had grown into a heroic sized painting, and the tender recollections of the days that were gone came back to him like the never ceasing surge of the sea. The little lady had never met Mr. Bell, but she had known his late predecessor since early childhood. She knew that a man who was kindly disposed towards the human family had not dealt very gently with that race of demons known as the Home Guard, and she further knew that this generation of

vipers had destroyed his home, his happiness and his life. She knew all and could forgive the minor offenses and condone those of larger proportions. She had promised to marry Kit Dalton and now that Kit was no more, she might look with favor on his mild mannered successor.

Wherefore, Mr. Bell gave up his commission of a ranger and set out horseback for the far away mountains of Kentucky, where many thousands of dollars were offered for the person of Kit Dalton, his late friend, dead or alive.

* * * I was unable to persuade the father of my betrothed that Texas would be a safe retreat for his daughter and prospective son-in-law. He had kept himself well advised of the rewards that were out for me and knew some impecunious friend might rise up at any time and betray my whereabouts to the minions of the law for a price. There was no moving the old gentleman.

"Go to some foreign country, my boy, and when you shall have established yourself in some legitimate business, you can come and take away my daughter as your wife, but positively not till then."

All the arguments I could bring to bear would not move him, and I, Kit Dalton, the guerrilla and outlaw, bowed humbly to the wishes of a very harmless old man. However, he agreed that we could marry then and there if we wanted to, but I would have a wife in spirit only, as she could not follow me then, nor could she come to me till I had established myself in business in some foreign country or some sequestered nook in the far west, where the sleuths could not corrupt, nor posses break through and steal—my life or liberty. The conditions were hard, but I met them like a man and accordingly we were quietly married at her home in Logan county.

At this time the chancery clerk of Logan county was a first cousin of my wife and a warm friend of mine. He issued the license and to keep prying eyes from seeing the very much-in-demand name of Kit Dalton on the files, he pasted a piece of paper over the names on the license stub, which he did not remove until I was several days' journey from the place. The minister who officiated at our marriage was a Reverend Mr. Spain, a life-long friend of the family, in whose hands our secret was safe. Just one hour

after we were pronounced man and wife I took my leave of the dear little wife and her family, and once more struck out for the west, and did not pitch camp until I had come into Pueblo, Colorado, where I readily secured a position as guard in a silver mine.

At this point I remained for one year, then secured a more lucrative place in the service of a mail contractor, who had the route from Deadwood, Colorado, to Tombstone.

I will take up very little time and space to relate my experiences as a coach guard, for aside from the frequent little brushes we had with marauding Indians, there is nothing to relate.

One instance, however, I will record, as it is the most eventful one in all my experience in the mail service.

The incident referred to is about as follows:

We were passing through one of those numerous defiles that abound in that rugged country with a quantity of mail and a goodly number of passengers when, without warning or any premonitions of danger, a *cloudburst* of arrows came pouring down on us from the rocky heights high above. In the first volley two arrows buried their ragged heads in the coach walls and several passed through the clothing of the passengers. Aside from the singing of the arrows there was not a sight or sound of hostility anywhere to be seen or heard. At the second volley there broke out from the cliffs the most savage and blood curdling war cry I had ever heard, and the echoes bounding and rebounding from crag to crag intensified the dangers that threatened us.

Springing from my seat, I caught sight of a young buck all covered with gorgeous war trappings and besmeared with paint. At the crack of my rifle he came tumbling down the precipitous wall of the mountain, not stopping in his mad plunge until he was within ten feet of us without a sound bone in his body. Then the battle opened and for half an hour guards and passengers alike were pouring a steady stream of lead into the red skins, who in turn were sending their arrows thick and fast into our midst, though without results.

On a pinnacle full fifty feet above his companions, an old chief stood with folded arms directing his murderous men. He was a good target and I had a good gun. Bang

went the gun, but to my utter surprise the old chief remained as one transfixed. I was fixing to shoot again when I saw him stagger, then a piercing cry like the scream of an eagle came from the pinnacle and the old fellow came lumbering down. One of the boys told me afterwards in a spirit of badinage that mine was a useless shot, as the fall alone would have killed him.

Meanwhile, the arrows kept on whizzing by us and the other boys were battering the granite walls of the mountain with their rifle balls.

The Indians, seeing the ineffectiveness of their arrow attack, soon called nature to their aid and began to tug at massive rocks to loosen them from their moorings and start them down the mountainside.

"Quick, boys!" I yelled, "whip up the horses and beat it out of here as fast as you can, the devils are trying to turn the mountain over on us." Then taking aim at a big old buck who with several others was tugging at a huge rock, I cracked down and evidently broke the rascal's leg, for he set up a painful howl just as the rock came loose from its anchorage, and the next second several Indians and an immense stone came crashing down the mountainside all in intermingling confusion, but before they hit the bottom our coach was a hundred yards down the road, and it is well that the coach had left its stand, for when the rock was at a height of about fifty feet above us it broke in two and one-half of it, weighing at least a ton, buried itself in the very place where the horses had stood.

It would have been foolhardy in the extreme for us to remain and give battle against such terrible odds. Our only hope was in flight and that right rapidly. We hurried on as fast as the four horses could wheel us, and just as we were crossing a little stream, I saw an arrow strike the lead horse's neck and come out at the other side. The poor horse sank down into the shallow stream, never to rise again.

Now we were in a tight place. The yells of the savages were growing louder and fiercer every minute and their arrows were coming faster. The red skins seemed to have the way lined for at least half a mile, sometimes on both sides of the road and sometimes on one or the other.

Our ammunition was getting alarmingly low and there was no telling how long we would have to keep up the fight. It was very evident that the end was in sight, for now on both sides and behind us howled and wailed the infuriated demons and the inoffending arrows kept on shivering their ragged points against the rocks around us.

"They are closing in on us, boys," I said, "and there is no hope for us except in shooting to kill. Let no man fire his gun except to kill. It is our only hope."

I had no more than gotten the words out of my mouth when I heard the clatter of horses' feet in the distance, which was soon followed by the hair-raising shouts of a rescue party. On they came at a terrible clatter, with yells enough to drown the roar of a battle, and the Indians thinking an army had come to the rescue, disappeared amid the rocks and boulders of the mountain.

In all this battle we had'nt a man wounded and only one horse killed. I don't know how many of the red skins we killed, but it is safe to say not less than fifty, counting those who had been crushed by the fall of the rock.

The battle had lasted just four hours without any casualties on our side, but had it raged half an hour longer, there would not have been one left of us to tell the sad tale.

With a good horse to take the place of our dead one, we hooked up in the middle of the stream and hastened on as fast as the horses could carry us.

Had the Indians known there were only six in the rescue party, it is altogether probable none of us would have escaped, but what they lacked in numbers they made up in fuss and terror-inspiring noises.

When we arrived in Deadwood the passengers, who had never been in such close quarters before, related our experience in the most thrilling manner and the many good things they were pleased to say concerning my methods of holding out against such overwhelming odds so interested the citizens of Deadwood they offered me the *protfolio* of city marshal, which I accepted solely on account of the compliment—as many a poor fellow had done before and many afterwards.

The lawless element at that time was in the great ma-

jority and you may be sure we had to deal with them with iron hands.

My experiences as an officer were far from pleasant, for it too often became my duty to fire on the reckless element whose greatest offenses were shooting out street lamps and riding their bucking bronchos into saloons and stores. Poor fellows, they were only "showing off," but if the keeper of the joint into which they rode made a vigorous protest, one or the other usually had to summons an undertaker.

As an officer I had to perform my duty, and my duty sometimes demanded that I bore a hole through some fellow who had never done me a personal injury, whereas, as an outlaw, I had never fired on a man who was not doing his little best to kill me.

At the end of one year I decided to surrender my commission and go east for my bride, for I knew from experience that I could live in that section unmolested, and if the sleuths got on my trail, the good people would not hesitate to help me elude them. I could get a good paying job in many places and the time was ripe for me to hold my father-in-law to his promise. Therefore, at the suggestion of the citizens, I went to Pueblo for the purpose of meeting "Wild Bill," and if possible to get him to fill my place. In this I was successful, and concerning this desperate officer whose deeds of daring were destined to echo through the universe, I will say more later on. Being now a part of the machinery of the law and held in the highest esteem, I felt like I belonged once more to the human family and that my little wife was entitled to share my good fortunes with me; wherefore, I set out for a long drive for my old stamping grounds in Kentucky.

In Sherman, Texas, I bought a covered wagon, the only Pullmans of that day, and hired a seventeen-year-old Mexican boy to accompany me on the long trip. I reached my father-in-law's home about midnight, and as a matter of course the house was dark and seemingly deserted. I began to have dire forebodings lest something had befallen my wife and her people, for it had been two years and eight months since I had taken leave of them, and in all that time not a line had passed between me and my wife, for the reason that the mails are terrible tattlers. In all this

time I had never had one word from home and knew not if my people were dead or alive. I but knew that I wanted my wife and that if she were on the green earth I would find her.

Without giving my Mexican driver any instructions, I jumped from the wagon and hurrying to the gate, raised the iron latch and when it had fallen again into its hasp with a loud click, a light flared out in the upper room of the house, and joy filled my throbbing heart when I heard these glad words: "Oh, papa, Kit has come, Kit has come."

In less than half a minute the dear faithful heart was in my arms crying for very gladness.

I asked her afterwards how she knew who it was who opened the gate and if it was a habit of her's to cry out, "Kit has come" whenever the gate latch was agitated, to which she replied, "No, it is not a practice, for it is the first and only time I have ever felt your presence near me since you left."

The inscrutable ways of women are beyond finding out.

After resting up several days, we packed up and started for the far west on our bridal tour, and I do not suppose in all this world any two young people ever had a more delightful honeymoon.

East of the Mississippi river we traveled only by night, but when we had crossed the great stream we traveled by day and every scene was a thing of beauty and every minute a joy forever.

As game was plentiful and the streams swarmed with fish, we kept well in provisions and it seemed to me that the real art of cooking had just been discovered by that little new wife of mine, and, happy to relate, in all the years that have followed she has not lost her cunning in this respect.

When we arrived at Fort Concho I was besought to join the rangers, who were sorely in need of help, and once again I cast my lot with the boys who had ridden many a plug to death trying to capture me.

With my wife domiciled comfortably in San Antonio, I felt well enough established to remain in Texas, and for four years I put in my time to good advantage against the

roving, thieving, marauding red brother, and did all in my power to keep the happy hunting grounds well supplied with raw recruits.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN ARKANSAS MERCHANT. A CITIZEN OF MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE. COLONEL KIT DALTON OF THE CUBAN ARMY.

Getting now along in years and tired of chasing the minions of Geronimo, I concluded it was about time for me to settle down and gain some experience in the commercial pursuits of life, wherefore, I went into Arkansas and opened a general mercantile business, the name of which was J. D. Armstrong & Co. I was the Mr. Armstrong in question and did a flourishing business. One year later I sold out to my partner, sought another promising locality and went again into the mercantile business. My second venture was a success in a modest way and now having accumulated a substantial bank account, I left Arkansas and went to Memphis, where I have continued to live till this day. Going back a little further, however, I take up the threads of my life in the beginning of the year 1897.

In the spring of this year business called me to St. Louis and while there met a recruiting officer of the insurgent army of Cuba, then engaged in a death grapple for independence from the mother country.

After a short acquaintance with this gentleman, we became mutually interested in each other, and at his earnest solicitation I assisted him in recruiting men and buying munitions of war.

For several weeks we worked industriously and succeeded in enlisting ninety men and laying in a good supply of war materials, which were paid for by drafts made on the Cuban Juanta, whose headquarters were in New York.

When we had finished our work I returned to Memphis, and finding my wife possessed of a keen desire to visit her people in Kentucky, I consented for her to gratify her wishes on condition she would give her consent for me to

join the Army of Patriots, then battling desperately against Weyler, the Spanish butcher.

I quickly put my house in order and rejoined my late comrade in Texas and with the army of raw recruits went to Tampico, Mexico, where our recent St. Louis purchases were awaiting us.

In Mexico we picked up twenty greasers, whom we shipped along with our other army paraphernalia to Galveston, and when the coast was clear, set sail for the Cuban coast.

Owing to the close surveillance of the coast patrol, our vessel was forced to leave the beaten path of the ocean, and having to dodge so many patrol vessels and go so far out of the way, we were two weeks making the short run.

As Spanish gunboats were known to be prowling around near the coast, we were forced to watch our opportunity, and when it came at last we landed about fifty miles north of Matanzas, where we were met by a convoy from Garcia's army and set to work loading our effects on a pack train. In two days we had unloaded our cargo and were en route to Garcia's headquarters in the mountains.

When the recruiting officer reported to Gomez and gave him an account of my career in the west, the general sent for me, and when I was come into his presence he greeted me most cordially. I suppose he did; he looked it, and may have expressed it for all I know.

When the formal introduction was over, the general said to me (that is, an interpreter told me so), "I have heard of your exploits in the western part of your great country, Captain, and I congratulate you on all your successes, more particularly on your success in being reinstated as a citizen of your glorious country."

"I thank you, general," I said in genuine English, being the only tongue I was ever able to handle.

"Granting the accounts that have been reported to me of your exploits are true, I take it that your method of warfare is in accord with our methods, and I trust you may be able to give us the benefit of your guerrilla tactics."

"I'll take pleasure in giving you the best that's in me, general."

"You Americans are great lovers of freedom and the champions of liberty."

"We inherited it from our forefathers, sir, and a good inheritance it is."

"Quite right, Captain. We know nothing of liberty. We are a nation of slaves and it is our purpose to establish a republican form of government fashioned after your own and to this end, sir, we ask the assistance of lovers of liberty and human rights. I hope we understand each other, sir."

"I trust I understand your purposes better than I do your tongue, general," I said with a smile.

The general unbent for the fractional part of a second and smiled faintly.

"I take pleasure, sir, in commissioning you captain, and will ask, sir, that you take your men and train our patriots in the use of the improved arms you have helped us to purchase."

"I'll take pleasure in doing so, general."

"Then train them how to manipulate the guns. All they need to know is how to load and unload them. They are good shots already, and mind you, captain, I do not wish you to expend needless ammunition in target practice. We need every round for Weyler's butchers."

After a conference lasting two hours I had ninety Americans under me, twenty greasers and ninety patriots, who knew no more about handling our improved arms than "Consul The Second." But they soon learned and as they knew full well they were not only fighting for their freedom, but their lives as well, they made as good soldiers as their tropical sun would permit.

The next day I started out with my command and on that very afternoon came upon a bunch of marauders from the royal army who seemed to think they had nothing to do but make ugly faces at us to drive us back into the mountains, but they were quickly disillusioned, for when we opened up on them with our long range, rapid fire guns, the few survivors beat a hasty retreat and there came no more into that vicinity "gentlemen in search of harmless sport."

Having driven these fellows back upon their own army, we scouted around, every day pushing further and further

into the interior, and every little brush we had with them sent them scurrying back.

The third day out we encountered an army of about two hundred of the royal troops and after an engagement lasting about two hours drove them from the field, where they left all their plunder, seeking their own safety in the best way possible.

It was a very neat and an extremely profitable victory, as we captured a good supply of foodstuffs and a quantity of ammunition, which, however, was unsuited to the new guns we had brought over with us, but was all right for the patriots' fowling pieces.

When the news of this victory was borne to Garcia he expressed his delight at my manner of warfare and forthwith commissioned me as colonel and my pay was to be whatever I could obtain from the enemy. No salary was attached to my honorable position.

Being now a colonel and well regarded by General Garcia, I was directed to set out immediately to intercept a wagon train which was then en route from Havana to Matanzas. It was supposed to be a rich train and worth sacrificing a number of men to possess it.

"Capture it at any cost," said Garcia.

Then to make matters more certain, he put another hundred patriots under me in order to better insure my success.

Three days later I had my men concealed in the thick tropical undergrowth that lined the road and they were disposed as follows: Captain Chumley, who was serving under me, was sent about a quarter of a mile up the road with one hundred and fifty men, while I, with the same number, waited on behind in order to attack the train after the last wagon had passed.

I had told Chumley not to fire until he heard the battle open in the rear, and as soon as he heard the first gun, for him to open up from his ambuscade and shoot to hurt. I knew I could depend on Chumley, for he had already shown his cool nerve and his masterly cunning several times before.

We were not in hiding more than an hour when we heard the heavy wagons laboring along the rocky road, and when the last wagon had passed me I gave the word and the old gentleman with the glass and scythe got pretty busy in the

middle of the road. At our first volley the rear guard—what was left of them—fired into the bushes, then lit out at the top of their speed to overtake their forward comrades, and as they turned a sharp bend in the road ran smash into the vanguard coming back at break-neck speed. Chumley had opened up in front and for a few minutes the wildest disorder prevailed, many panic-stricken riders being knocked from their horses as the frightened beasts ran head-on into each other. Then it was that Chumley and I closed in, using our improved guns with terrible effect. Colonel Gomez, of the royal troops, seeing himself caught in a trap and his men falling like wheat before a scythe, judged himself overwhelmingly outnumbered and surrendered his forces to American valor and Cuban patriotism.

After they had stacked arms and we had taken possession of them, Colonel Gomez looked about him in amazement and said to me through an interpreter:

“Colonel, where is the rest of your command?”

“They are all here before you, colonel,” I replied.

“What! This little band defeat my gallant command? It is impossible,” said the colonel, his face showing the surprise and astonishment he felt. Then he added, “How many men have you, colonel?”

“Three hundred,” I replied.

“Three hundred! And is that all?”

“That is all.”

“It passes comprehension. Three hundred defeat my army of six hundred trained soldiers. I can’t understand it. Why, colonel, my men fell like an army of several thousand was attacking. What kind of guns are you using ”

I showed the colonel our improved guns and showed him how we worked them. He examined the gun I handed him critically, then, a slight smile overspreading his sun-tanned face, he said, “I cease to wonder. If I had such guns the war would terminate in one week.”

After the short parley was over, Colonel Gomez and I rode side by side up into the mountains, leaving the wagon train with its rich cargo in the hands of Chumley, who promptly destroyed all wagons that were too cumbersome to get up the mountains and brought the lighter ones loaded

with such articles and foodstuff as the patriots stood so sadly in need of.

When we were come to General Garcia's headquarters that old veteran was overjoyed with the capture, for it was a rich one and proved to be the most valuable capture effected by the patriots during the whole war.

Besides the many loads of provisions, army supplies and foodstuffs, we had the good fortune to land "the treasury," which contained eighty thousand dollars in gold, which was divided among the soldiers, my part being eighty dollars.

After Garcia had calmed down a bit from his first flush of excitement, he ordered a hollow square formed about me and my men, which also included Chumley, and ordered three bravos to the gallant North Americans—the first time I had ever been reminded that I was a North American.

After haranguing his soldiers in a jargon no civilized tongue could have uttered, the gallant old veteran took Colonel Gomez in hand and though he hated every emblem of Castile, he treated his prisoner with the utmost consideration, but what disposition he made of them I never learned, for a few days after this incident I was stricken with Dengue fever and my services to the Gem of the Antilese was brought to a sudden end.

General Garcia was promptly notified and lost no time having me transported to Galveston, where the Juanta had arranged with the government of the United States of *North America* to care for the American wonder in the Marine Hospital.

For sixty days I lay roasting with the terrible fever, being absolutely unconscious for more than two weeks.

When I was able to leave my ward in the hospital I was wheeled out in a rolling chair and as soon as we were settled in a comfortable shade, I heard these thrilling words, "Extra, extra. All about the blowing up of the Maine in Havana Harbor."

History tells the rest. War was promptly declared, which, as you know, resulted in the independence of the island. But I was cruelly denied the pleasure of contributing my little share to the victory which was practically won before Schley met Cervera in Santiago Bay.

SKETCHES.

EXPERIENCE OF MR. CHARLES BELL WITH AN INDIAN HORSE THIEF.

In the year of our Lord, 1878, I was Mister Charles Bell, a gentleman of respectable habits, a Texas ranger and a duly authorized punisher of evildoers. My stormy career in the west had eminently fitted me for the position and I feel reasonably certain I earned the liberal wages paid me. As I had dodged the law so successfully on so many occasions, I knew the route pretty well.

On one occasion I was sent from Ft. Griffin to Ft. Belknap with messages for the garrison, and being overtaken by night on my return, stopped by the wayside and got lodging with a homesteader, whose name has escaped me. This old gentleman and his wife lived alone in a single room house with a lean-to, far removed from any populous center, and by reason of their isolated condition were ever exposed to the depredations of marauding Indians. In their solitude a stranger was always welcome, especially so if he happened to be a ranger, for the rangers were the bulwark of their safety.

After supper my host and I sat in front of his humble dwelling talking of the old times back in civilization, and the subject being mutually interesting, we sat up till a late hour, enjoying the cool refreshing breeze and the quiet moonless night with its myriad of stars dancing in the deep blue of Texas skies.

The main room of the house was their living quarters, while the lean-to served as kitchen, dining room and guests' chamber; not a place one would select from choice, but very acceptable indeed to a tired ranger or a belated wayfarer.

It was about eleven o'clock when my pallet was spread and I had just removed my heavy riding boots when my well trained ears caught the dull sound of a bump, bump, bump, which sometimes seemed to issue from beneath my window and sometimes like a faint echo from far over the plains. There appeared no special significance in the sound, yet the deathlike stillness that otherwise prevailed on the broad expanse gave a sinister meaning to the most trivial

noises and attracted the trained scout as readily as a fire alarm in the dead of night catches the attention of people in populous communities.

Without making a sound, I sat on my heavy blanket and listened. Soon I heard the same dull monotonous bump, bump, bump, and slipping cat-like to the window, I trained my ears on the darkness and peering into the darkness, watched for any shadow that might pass before my visions, but none passed and the sound had died away. But what I had heard was an ominous sound and now the deadly stillness seemed fraught with evil forebodings. I was tired from my long ride, but security meant more than rest. I could wait yet a while to see what the coming minutes might bring forth. In a few minutes that muffled thud smote upon my listening ears and now there was no mistaking its location. It was unquestionably right under my window, not ten feet from me. Scarce breathing, lest I dispel the illusion or frighten away the maker of the sound, I eased my head out of the window and there right under me was a regular Goliath of an Indian, tugging away at a post in the corral, shaking it loose preparatory to lifting it out and making an opening large enough for a horse to pass through. Two poles had already been removed. Two more would make a gap large enough for the horses penned in the corral adjoining the house to escape.

In breathless stillness I waited till the noble red man should put his strength against his burden and when he bent over, wrapped his long arms around the pole and began to heave to. I eased my gun out the window, intending to frighten him with the first shot, then take better aim when he straightened up his huge bulk, but at the crack of my gun a noise escaped his lips which sounded as much like "Oh, Lordy" as any Christian tongue could utter, then he measured his length and moved not a muscle.

The settler, hearing the report of my big pistol, sprang from his bed and half awake, danced about in his room, asking, "What's the matter, what's the matter?"

I quickly explained the cause of the disturbance and the next minute he had a tallow dip in his hand, which we held out the window, and seeing the prostrate thief lying at full length, he exclaimed, "Whoop, ain't he a whopper!"

"Put that light out and duck back into the room," I yelled, and he no sooner did so than a long stream of fire shot out from the darkness and a bullet came crashing through the shutter and nipped a lock of his dishevelled hair.

"We're in for it, Cap," said the settler. "They ain't no telling how many of them devilish red skins is hid out thar in the darkness. What we goin' to do about it?"

"There's no danger of them storming the house," I said, for I knew too well the habits of their mythical bravery. But I instructed the old fellow to load his two guns, give one to his wife and together we would send a volley in the direction from whence came the blaze of fire.

"All ready?" I asked.

"All ready," replied the settler.

"Fire!" I yelled in stentorian tones as though I was ordering an attack of a regiment.

Almost simultaneously three guns turned loose and we were rewarded by hearing a wow, wow, wow.

He fired again, but nothing came of it. The Indians had fled.

There was no sleep in the settler's home that night, for there is always danger of the reappearance of the red devils for the purpose of removing their dead if for nothing more formidable.

But the Indians came no more, and when daylight broke we went to the side of the house to view the scene of the midnight tragedy and there lay the ignoble red man, stark and stiff, with a great hole through his heart. We scoured the plains for the other one, but only found the course he had taken by a trail of blood.

"I wish to goodness we could find the scoundrel," said my host dejectedly. "I need him in my business."

"Why, what in the name of goodness do you want with a dead Indian?" I asked.

"The reward, pardner, the reward. Why, them fellows dead is worth considerable more than they ever could be worth living. The cattlemen's association is givin' ten dollars a head for them."

"Well, you have had a pretty fair run of business, anyway," I said.

"Yes, but he's yourn. I was a goin' to claim tother one, 'cause jest as like as not me or the old 'oman drapped him."

"I'm a ranger, my dear sir, and can't get anything on my kill, so you can claim our Goliath and get the reward."

The old fellow protested a while, but when he was reassured that it would not profit me anything by claiming the dead horse thief, he readily accepted my gruesome gift.

After we had eaten our breakfast of fat fried bacon and cornbread baked in a skillet-like oven, with fire above and underneath, I saddled my horse preparatory to leaving, then thinking of the dead Indian, I offered to help load him in a wagon, for I knew the old fellow was bent on taking him to *market*.

"No, I kin manage him all right," said my host. "You've done your part. I'll do the rest."

Thereupon I bade them good-bye and hit the trail.

In due time I was in the little town of Palapinto, where I had to transact some business for the rangers, and just as I was ready to leave, saw to my surprise the old settler come driving into town in a one-horse wagon. There was nothing in the wagon but himself.

"Where's your Indian?" I asked him.

"There he is behind," said the old fellow, with a backward motion of his thumb.

I rode to the back of his wagon, and there he was, poor red devil, hitched on behind with a long rope, after the manner of dragging off a dead horse. He got his ten dollars, too.

SKETCH NUMBER 2.

MR. THOMAS MARBRY'S EXPERIENCE AS A COTTON PICKER.

On one occasion, the date of which has escaped me, I was Mr. Thomas Marbry, assistant cattle puncher to one Mister Jesse Hittson, a cattle dealer of considerable importance in West Texas. I had been in the employ of this gentleman for several weeks, when we took a large herd to the San Antonio market. As I had no further business in San Antonio after getting the cattle into the stock yards, I left my employer to transact his business matters and journeyed alone back to the west. As my *tenure of office* with Mr. Hittson expired with the delivery of the cattle, I was forced to seek other employment, and when I came into Bastrop county, on the Colorado river, I met up with a Dr. Perry, who was in need of cotton pickers. I had never picked a lock of cotton in my life, but feeling pretty sure I could learn the art in a little while, I hired myself to the doctor at the rate of one dollar per hundred, including board for myself and horse.

The first day I succeeded in gathering one hundred and ninety-one pounds of the staple and improved on this every day afterwards. The work being so different to anything I had ever done in my life, there was a novelty to it besides the good pay and I heartily congratulated myself for falling heir to such a soft snap.

I had been picking for several days and was enjoying the sport keenly, when all of a sudden a hot wave swept over the field, which forever disqualified me as a cotton picker.

It came about in this wise:

One morning about nine o'clock as the doctor and I were grappling with the staple we saw a man come riding through the field at a mad gallop, shouting at the top of his voice and waving his hat frantically. On he came and when he was near enough to make himself understood, he told between his gasps for breath how four robbers had entered his grandfather's home an hour ago and relieved the feeble old gentleman of five hundred dollars in gold. He said the robbers had applied burning matches to the bottom

of his grandfather's feet, to his ears and his fingers in their determination to extort from the old fellow information leading to his hidden treasure. The torture became so severe that the poor old soul withered at last and told the rascals where the money was buried.

They lost no time in digging it up—five hundred dollars—and mounting their horses, made off in the direction of the Colorado river. The excited young man besought us by everything sacred and otherwise to join him and another man in a chase, and the doctor readily offered his services, asking me to join him. To this I agreed, and as soon as we could saddle our horses we joined the other two and went in pursuit.

When we came to the river, which was fordable anywhere in that section, we saw where the robbers had crossed over, the ground being wet on the opposite bank from water that had dripped from their horses' legs.

From all indications I judged that the miscreants could not be more than half a mile ahead, and urging the rest to follow me, put spurs to my horse and in less than ten minutes we saw them in a long stretch of road not more than a quarter of a mile ahead of us. Where they were riding the road was as straight as an arrow, but a few hundred yards further on it made a sharp bend around a woodland.

I saw our opportunity to capture them and stopping our party, told them to wait till they had gotten around the bend, then put spurs to their horses and we would be right on the highwaymen before they suspected anything. To this they readily agreed. I took the lead and popping spurs to my fleet horse, shot off down the road like an arrow from a cross bow, thinking the others were following close behind.

When I came to the turn I was not more than fifty yards from the robbers, and seeing me, one of them called to his mate, "Look there! Dig out!" Instantly the four of them were in rapid flight and as they turned to see what had become of us, were stricken with horror to see me so close on their heels. "Shoot as you run!" commanded the leader, and instantly three pistols were emptied at me.

It was now my time and raising my heavy pistol, I took aim at the leader and cracked down. The rascal reeled in

his saddle, then turning loose all holt, hit the dust, dead as a mackerel. The next shot brought down a second one and the other two broke for shelter in the woods. They had not gone very far when the third one fell with a great bullet hole through his shoulder.

"Throw up your hands and stop!" I shouted to the fourth, and he lost no time obeying orders. I took possession of the gentleman and marched him back in the road to turn him over to the avenging grandson of Mr. Young, but to my utter amazement not one of the pursuers had followed me. They were sitting on their horses where I left them.

"Come on, boys!" I shouted triumphantly, "I've got 'em all."

They came up slowly and when they saw the havoc I had wrought, began to shake their heads and mutter.

"What the devil's the matter with you fellows?" I yelled.

"I'm afraid we've made a mistake," said the doctor in great bewilderment. "You see, Mr. Marbry, we ain't officers and had no right to kill them fellows and I'm mightily afraid we're in for trouble."

"What were you chasing them for if you didn't want to capture them?" I demanded.

The doctor shook his head and made no reply.

"Where's that bag of gold?" I asked of the captive.

"We ain't got no gold, Mister, swear to God we ain't."

"What did you do with it, then?" I demanded.

"We ain't never had none."

"You've made a big mistake, Mr. Marbry," chimed in the doctor. "We ain't officers and have no warrants to arrest these gentlemen, much less kill them."

"But you say they are the robbers," I persisted.

"This gentleman says they ain't," replied the doctor, still shaking his hoary head.

"Now look here, doctor," I said sternly, "You say I have made a mistake. Maybe I have. So have you. If I'm in for trouble so are the rest of you."

"We never done the shootin'," said the doctor, with an air of studied indifference.

"Now, see here, doctor, and you other cowards, too, if you think you are going to saddle this muss on me and

escape yourselves, you are mightily mistaken. Now, sir, jump down from your horse and examine those dead ones and see if they haven't got the bag of gold."

The doctor shook his grizzled head.

"Down off of that horse, you infamous blackguard and search those bodies," I shouted, and as I said it I threw my big pistol in the medicine man's face.

With the agility of a sixteen-year-old buck the doctor sprang from his horse, approached one of the dead men and began to fiddle around in search of the gold.

"Turn him over, you devil, and examine him closely," I shouted, "or by thunder I'll drop you across that corpse."

The doctor took hold of his job with more enthusiasm and in less than five seconds fished out the missing money.

"Hand it here," I commanded.

He passed the bag over to me and there it was beyond all question of a doubt—five hundred dollars in a muslin bag with the old gentleman Young's name written in plain letters on it.

"Now what have you got to say?" I asked.

"We ain't officers, Mr. Marbry, and this little day's work is goin' to cost somebody a mighty lot of trouble."

By this time my anger was pretty well aroused and I can say in all sincerity I never in all my life had a keener desire to dispatch a bunch of renegades than I had right then and there.

"Come," I said, "lets go into town and notify the officers. I did the killing and I'm not afraid to own up."

We got the wounded man on his horse, placed the captive on his and together we started back to Bastrop, 12 miles distant.

When we were in about five miles of the little town I told the doctor to take our prisoners on in and that I would go by the house and put on better clothes and join them in town.

With this we parted and we have remained in that condition ever since. I knew it would never do for me to go into town with that cowardly bunch, for the first thing that would be asked was, "Who is this young fellow, anyway? Where did you pick him up and where does he hail from?"

I was in no position to have my record investigated and for this reason quitted that section forever. Had that gold belonged to either the doctor or the grandson of Mr. Young, I would not have hesitated a moment to appropriate it, but as it belonged to a decrepit old man, I turned it over to his grandson for delivery to its rightful owner.

Whatever became of this outfit I have never learned. My only motive at the time was to save myself, but when I was a day's journey away, it flashed through my mind that the doctor might have a hard time explaining that the man who did the killing had eloped. I hope these thoughts entered his mind, too, for though the law could do nothing about it, I felt a grim satisfaction in knowing the cowardly old pill roller would be pretty much concerned about his safety.

That was the last of my cotton picking. I had earned about twenty dollars plucking the staple, and had lost it all because of my Happy Hooligan desire to make every man's troubles my own.



GEN. CLEMENT A. EVANS and GEN. FRED D. GRANT, shaking hands during the parade of Confederate Veterans at Confederate reunion, Memphis, Tenn., June, 1909.

SKETCH NUMBER THREE.

A WARNING DREAM.

I do not claim to be what the world would call a dreamer. The active life I led in the strenuous days gone by would refute such a charge; yet I have had dreams, the recollection of which I shall ever cherish as a gift from God. In thus speaking of the Deity, I do not take the name in Vain. I use it with all reverence and gratitude, for I know the dreams were warnings and they were good. All good comes from God, therefore, it was the great Creator who warned me and my sense of gratitude is as keen now as it was in the happy moments of my deliverance.

On three different occasions I was delivered from sure death by these dreams, but as they were so nearly alike, I shall narrate only one of them.

I shall first submit a few prefatory remarks which, as you will see, are a part of the narrative.

It chanced that a misunderstanding arose between me and the officers in Southern Kentucky and as they made it an object for me to quit that section, I did so with great enthusiasm.

In my eagerness to oblige these conservators of the law and a battalion of reward-seekers, I did not wait for the light of day to guide my wandering feet, but hit the road at night and that in great haste.

In my wild flight through a plutonian darkness, my horse ran into an old dead treetop, where he sustained an injury which threatened to put him altogether out of commission. But I made my escape and riding all night, came to the home of my cousin, Dr. Dawson, who lived only a few miles from the little village of Cadiz. This was in the early spring of a year which I shall take pains to leave untold, as complications might arise which could be the least bit embarrassing.

When I reached Dr. Dawson's home and told him of my misadventure, he kindly took my wounded horse off my hands and sold me a very fine animal, for which I paid him three hundred dollars.

Thus mounted, I quit the settlement, returning no more till the following fall.

When I surreptitiously returned to the doctor's home I was glad to find that my wounded animal was well and sound again, but I was not permitted to rejoice long because of this good luck, for before I was out of the settlement I had just cause to be very sorry the unfortunate animal had not succumbed to his wounds.

It seems that when the horse had fully recovered, the doctor had turned him over to a cropper who had used him the entire time in making his crop. This wretch, whose name was Alman and lived on the doctor's place not a great ways from his house, saw me when I rode up, and throwing the plow gear off the animal, he mounted him bareback and hurried into Cadiz, only five miles away, to inform the officers of my presence. He needed the money. However, I learned this later.

Being pretty tired from my long and swift ride, I went to bed about nine o'clock, and as was my habit, fell asleep at once, and it seemed that I had hardly closed my eyes before I began to have quaint dreams. In one short moment I had lived over my life in the west, seen the James boys and all the rest of the bunch, been with Quantrell in some of his exploits, assisted in some questionable enterprise and was again fleeing in front of a maddened posse. It seemed to me that they were crowding me pretty close, then in a twinkling they had me surrounded and were yelling for my surrender. This realistic feature of the dream awakened me. The scenes were too livid to be the results of sleeping fancy. I jumped up with a start and got into my clothes in as great a hurry as though the house were really surrounded by officers. Buckling on my two heavy pistols I was ready for flight or fight, as the case might demand, and no sooner was I ready than I heard the clatter of horses' feet not more than a hundred yards down the road in the direction of Cadiz. I knew what it meant. It was no new sound to me. I had heard it too often to mistake its significance. To make my escape by the door was not to be thought of, for before I could reach it I knew the men hunters would be in the yard. There was only one other avenue of escape and that was a perilous one. I slipped cautiously to a window, which opened out over the kitchen,

and through this window crawled out on the old moss-covered roof, which was as slick as glass because of a drizzling rain. It was my idea to crawl over the comb of the house, reach the chimney at the far end and slide down on the inside of it, and carrying this idea into execution, I straddled the comb and crept slowly along, and it was all I could do to retain my equilibrium. Several times one foot or the other would skid from under me, but I held on as best I could with my hands until I had about reached my journey's end. I remember very distinctly that I called on the Lord for deliverance, for I stood sadly in need of divine assistance. Now it may seem strange to the average man, but some will understand how courage and hope can be born of a short prayer. As soon as I had invoked Celestial aid I reached for the chimney and as I did so the sobby moss let go its hold on the boards, and like an avalanche I went skeeting down the slick roof. I thought for one time the gates of mercy had been closed on me, for there was no place for me to land but right in among the men hunters below. Down I went and hit the ground in a crouching position, but like a cat, on my feet, right in the midst of my pursuers.

Instantly I arose and began firing on them and so complete was their surprise not a shot was fired at me. It might have been caution instead of surprise, for had the men shot, there was great danger of doing damage to each other. At the first crack of my pistol some unfortunate reward chaser howled and all the rest fell back.

The next minute I was in the horse lot and knowing where my horse was stalled, bridled and saddled him and was bounding away to safety before the officers ever thought of giving chase.

I learned afterwards that the fellow I hit caught a bullet in his leg, which did no serious damage, and that in a short while he claimed the distinction of being the only one of the party who was bold enough to expose his sacred person to my fire.

I make no pretensions to understand the psychology of dreams and therefore give all the credit to the God of my deliverance.

AUFWIEDERSEHEN.

In bringing this incomplete biography to an abrupt close, I fully realize it is no biography at all—being mere sketches of my tumultuous career, snatched from the flashes of memory as they came to me in lurid glimmer through the mists of the long ago.

It has been my purpose to write of my own adventures, independent of any associates, but I found this a matter of impossibility, for my life was so interwoven with some of my comrades that I could not untie the Gordian Knot without the aid of a cleaver.

Several names have appeared in these records, and as they are familiar ones in the annals of western *misadventure*, my editor saw fit to question me concerning them. His letter, which follows, explains his reasons for doing so.

I regret to state, however, that I do not feel at liberty to submit more than the mere mention of their birthplace and meagre circumstances of their death. I would not, if the success of this book depended solely on it, dishonor the dead or embarrass the living.

There yet remain a few survivors of my old comrades. They are still possessed of their mental faculties and can say all they want the public to know concerning themselves.

I shall always contend that many of us were not outlaws at heart, though circumstances made us rip the statutory laws from center to circumference. We were human beings who loved our country and fought for it in our own way. For this we were deprived of citizenship and the pursuits of gain by honest effort. We wanted to live and to succeed in this desire had to fight. That's the whole story.

Now, I bring these records to a close and in doing so can not select more appropriate words than those written by Coleman Younger to a friend long years ago. "*Think of me as I am, nothing extenuate; nor set down aught in malice.*"

I submit herewith the letter that called forth the above remarks:

“———, January 1, 1914.

“Captain Kit Dalton,
“48 North Second Street,
“Memphis, Tenn.

“My Dear Captain:—

“I am in receipt of your interesting manuscript and having gone through the papers in a thorough and painstaking manner, do not hesitate to set the seal of my approval and commendation on your efforts. The style and manner in which you have handled so delicate a subject does you credit and should receive the hearty endorsement of your living comrades. Many things you have evidently left untold and much you have left the reader to determine for himself; but I cannot imagine it will be a hard task for the average man to look through the thin gauze that you have drawn as a curtain over many of the scenes you have portrayed. However, I think it would be well and quite in keeping with the spirit and purpose of the records to let the public know more of some of the illustrious characters whose names you have mentioned. Many of these names are familiar to the general public, but just who they were, what they did and what was their end, is a little obscure.

“I am enclosing herewith a list of names of men who figured conspicuously in guerrilla warfare and later on turned their attention to less commendable pursuits. I trust you can, with propriety, give short sketches of their career.

“If you deem my request ill-advised, I beg that you will feel at perfect liberty to disregard this suggestion and pardon the presumption which impelled it.

“Faithfully yours,

“EDITOR.”

CHARLES WILLIAM QUANTRELL.

Q. Who was he, where was he born, what did he do and what became of him?”

A. Charles William Quantrell was a Marylander, having been born in the state of his nativity, which is usually the case with most illustrious men. I do not know the date

of his birth, but I judge he was about 30 years old when the war broke out. At this time he was a school teacher in Jackson or Clay county, Missouri. Don't know what sort of a teacher he was, but if his efforts were directed towards "Teaching the young how to shoot," I should judge from the sequence that he was eminently successful. He also taught school in Kansas at one time, and it may have been the results of a willow sprout in his strong right hand that created so many Kansas *Red Legs*.

Having become inoculated with the virus of western fever, Quantrell and his brother started out in a covered wagon for Colorado, but had not gotten out of the borders of Kansas when a horrible tragedy was enacted which changed the whole course of his life. The two wayfarers had pitched camp near a little rivulet and were spread out on their heavy blankets for rest and sleep when thirty Kansas Red Legs and highwaymen swooped down upon them with no other purpose in view than murder, pillage and plunder. At the first onslaught the brother was instantly killed and William was thought by the assassins to have been in the same fix, for his body was riddled with bullets and he fell across the body of his dead brother. The robbers took possession of the team and the whole outfit of the murdered brothers, and leaving them for dead, took their loot and were preparing to move on when one of the number discovered that dead bodies needed no blanket on which to rest, wherefore he called to his comrades and taking hold of two corners of the blanket, rolled their victims off on the wet ground, folded up the couch of the dead and resumed their journey.

It was not until broad daylight the next morning when William regained consciousness, and for three days he lay there nearer dead than alive, using what small energy he had in an almost vain endeavor to keep the buzzards off of his dead brother.

It was late in the afternoon of the third day when William heard the voice of an Indian in the distance calling to his missing dog. By superhuman effort he raised his feeble voice in a wail of distress. The Indian heard him and came straight away to investigate. The awful sight

which met the old savage's eyes touched his tough heart with pity and without ceremony he bundled up the wounded man and bore him to his cabin on the distant prairie.

For four months Quantrell remained a welcome guest of the Indian, who had busied himself the while in trying to locate the assassins. He finally struck a warm trail and located them at last in Lawrence, Kansas. He knew them by the wagon and team they had taken from their victims. After several days' quiet investigation, the Indian succeeded in getting the names of the thirty murderers and brought them to Quantrell.

As soon as Quantrell was able to mount a horse he went in pursuit of the robbers and he never ceased in his efforts to wipe them off the face of the earth till his own unhappy career was brought to a tragic close on Wakefield Farm.

Quantrell told me a few days before his death that he had the grim satisfaction of knowing beyond the question of a doubt that he had killed twenty-seven of the thirty.

A more polished gentleman, a truer friend, a braver soldier nor a more daring scout never lived in any age of the world.

I have related the time and place of his death in the records. But to make it plainer to you, he was killed on Wakefield Farm in Prentiss county, Kentucky, in 1865.

COLE YOUNGER.

Q. Will you give a short sketch of his life?"

A. Yes, a very short one. Cole is still living and his present address is Lee's Summit, Mo. Cole was and is a gentleman to the manner born—some of his acts to the contrary, notwithstanding. His father was a man of vast possessions, owning and cultivating extensive plantations.

In his early life Cole chose the ministry as his calling and his father, concurring in desires, sent him to a theological seminary, where he soon distinguished himself by the brilliancy of his mind and endeared himself to his associates by his frank open manner and extremely generous nature, which characteristics have never forsaken him.

While the Young Sky Pilot was pursuing his studies in

some distant town, the name of which has escaped me, his father was assassinated and robbed while returning from Kansas City, where he had been for the purpose of disposing of a large herd of cattle. The proceeds of this sale being a vast sum of money, he was set upon by eighteen jayhawkers, foully murdered and robbed.

When this tragic news reached Cole, he threw off his theological vestments, laid down his Bible for a sword and lost no time attaching himself to Quantrell's command. He was a valiant soldier and one of Quantrell's most trusted advisers.

I can state positively that the Northfield episode was not one of Cole's concoction. He advised strongly against the enterprise, but finally gave way to his generous nature and was influenced by men of unsound judgment. His brother, Bob, died in the Still Water prison from wounds received in the Northfield disaster. Jim, his other brother, an incessant sufferer from wounds received when Bob was killed, received executive clemency with Cole and was pardoned. Soon afterwards he committed suicide in St. Paul.

CLELL MILLER.

Q. Was he a man of any standing in his community? Where was he born and what became of him?

A. Yes, Clell was a man of high standing. He was six feet high. He was a native of Missouri, but I notice that proud commonwealth has erected no monument to his memory and if a day has ever been set aside as a holiday to commemorate this gentleman, it should be to commemorate his death and not his birth. He was a tough, though one of considerable courage and daring.

DICK LITTLE.

Q. What about him?"

A. Dick was a right clever fellow and a native of Missouri, where fighters were born. Some have thought that Dick turned traitor and by "squeeling" on his comrades wheedled Governor Crittenden out of a pardon, full and

free. I put little faith in the thought. Dick got his pardon before Jesse was killed, and having received absolution at the hands of the man who sprang into fame by pardoning Frank James later on, amended his ways and lived a rather respectable life until his death in 1893. Dick was not killed. That is, he met no tragic end. He died from the effects of a complication of malady and medicine.

GEORGE AND OL SHEPHERD.

Q. What was their particular strong point?

A. Rascality. They were both natives of Kentucky. They were both guerrillas under Quantrell and fought because they loved the spoils of the victor. They were *persona non grata* in the outlaw camps, but were permitted to remain with the Knights of the Trail because of their reckless courage and daredevil exploits. George was killed in or near Kansas City, though I can't state when. Ol was sent up for the Russelville bank robbery and the authorities made no mistake in the selection of this moral misfit when they dressed him in zebra togs. He served his three years in the Frankfort penitentiary and while there had the comforting intelligence conveyed to him that his wife had gotten a divorce, and she being an extremely pretty and fascinating young woman, succeeded in attracting a gentleman of considerable wealth, who married her. As soon as Ol had received his new suit of clothes he went in search of his unfaithful spouse and was making things so uncomfortable in her settlement that it was thought her new husband gave Ol five thousand dollars to clear out, which he did, and was never heard of afterwards. I do not know what he may have said about Cole, Frank and Jesse being in the Russelville robbery, but I can say most positively they were not there and I know what I'm talking about.

JIM AND JOE COLLINS.

Q. What was their career?

A. The records tell all I know about them. They lived in Denton county, Texas, while engaged in the hold-up

business and were pretty thrifty fellows in their line of work. Jim was killed by a posse after a Missouri Pacific enterprise. Joe was killed at Round Rock. I saw him fall, though I had no hand in the killing. I was a little too busy with other matters to ascertain who killed him. At this time I was a traveler *incog*. They were a pretty tough pair.

SAM BASS.

Q. Was he a guerrilla under Quantrell?

A. No. Sam's predilections were not that way. He was a native of Indiana and the most energetic of all the Knights of Shaded Eyes I have ever known. He was a first rate fellow, aside from his calling, and would risk his life for a friend as quickly as he would for a mail pouch or an express package. Sam was killed at Round Rock and has remained dead ever since.

CAPTAIN HOLT.

Q. Was he an outlaw?

A. No. He was a gallant soldier under Joe Shelby and Quantrell. He was an honorable and brave man all the days of his life. He died a natural death in Missouri after the war. Don't remember date.

FRANK JAMES.

Q. Why did he become an outlaw? Where does he live now?

A. Frank is now living near Kerny, Missouri. He is a native of Logan county, Kentucky. His father moved to Missouri in '56. He was a good soldier and is now regarded as a peaceable and honorable old gentleman.

JESSE JAMES.

Q. Was he the monster he has been painted?

A. No. Jesse was a little reckless at times, but one of

the most generous and warm hearted men I have ever known. Of all my associates in those trying times Jesse was my favorite. As a soldier under Quantrell, Jesse was amenable to discipline—a quick shot and a good one. As an outlaw he simply set the pace and was the founder of the Border Outlaw Dynasty. Enough slander has been written of Jesse to sink the earth a million years into perdition. Many an officer owes his death to Jesse's unerring aim and many a destitute widow and starving child owe their lives to his generosity.

ROBERT FORD.

Q. Who was he and why did he betray his master?

A: Bob Ford was a hired man in the employ of Jesse's mother. He went west and got into trouble. While there he stole two fine race horses and brought them east with him. Sam Mount was the rightful owner of the stolen horses. He swore out a warrant for Bob's arrest and it was sent to Sheriff Timberlake for service. It is thought Timberlake promised the miscreant immunity if he would furnish information leading to the capture of his benefactor, Jesse. Bob knew why Timberlake was so keenly anxious to apprehend Jesse. A big reward was the incentive. Bob evidently thought the reward would do him as much good as it would Timberlake. History tells how the murder was done. After this foul crime Bob went west, opened up a saloon with the thirty thousand he received for his crime and while enjoying a flourishing business with his saloon and gambling hell, was shot through the window of his saloon and instantly killed. None of the gang had a hand in his death. The murderer was supposed to have been some luckless fellow who had lost his pile in Bob's infamous joint. Bob was the Judas of the west and the lower regions are entirely *v* decent for him.

WOOD HITE.

Q. Your book does not dispose of him. How did he make his eternal exit?

A. Poor Wood. He was a cousin of the James boys and

a remarkably good fellow. He was killed by his old comrade, Dick Little, in Cass county, Missouri. It is supposed that some western dry goods surrounded the cause of his death.

WILD BILL.

Q. You make mention of this gentleman in a very small way and leave us in complete ignorance as to whom he was, what he was and what he did. Was he a guerrilla under Quantrell or an outlaw at any time? What gave the gentleman the sobriquet he wore?

A. William Hickock (Wild Bill) was a native of Illinois, I think. Therefore, not in the Confederate service in any capacity. I don't know whether he fought on the other side or not. If he did, I'm sure he contributed his part to the success of Union arms. He was never an outlaw at any time, as the impression seems to obtain in some sections. I don't know how he got his *alias*, unless it might be that his quickness of action and the serious consequences that followed his dealings with the lawless element gave him the name. He and I served as marshal of Deadwood, Colorado, and later on in the same capacity in Cheyenne. I was an outlaw in Kansas and Missouri at the same time I was a conservator of the law in Colorado and Wyoming. Of course, none knew this but me. I know nothing of William Hickock's career after we parted in Cheyenne except that he was assassinated several years later in Tombstone, Arizona.

THE DALTON GANG.

Q. I have been frequently asked if you were a member of the Dalton gang who operated in the Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, and in Kansas—especially the Coffeetown, Kansas, affair. Did you have any connection with them or any kinship?

A. The Dalton boys—Bob, Grats and Emmett—were second cousins of mine. I never had anything to do with these boys in private or public life. They appeared before the footlights long years after I had given up my reckless

life. It may occur to some that I advised the boys in their undertakings, but this is wholly at variance with the facts. They had pulled off several stunts before I knew they were in the game at all. Grats and Bob were United States marshals, serving with their older brother, Frank, who was a gentleman if there ever lived one. Frank was killed in the Cherokee nation about three miles from Ft. Smith while in the discharge of his duty. Bob and Grats followed the murderers till the next day and killed three of them. As a matter of form, Judge Parker, who was United States Judge, ordered their arrest. They did not understand the significance of the arrest and resisted the officers. From that they became outlaws.

Grats and Bob were killed in a raid on Coffeetown. Emmett was shot down, captured, tried and sent to the penitentiary for life. After serving twelve years he was pardoned and now lives at Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and I understand is living an honorable, upright life.

Q. You have made no mention of your career as a lecturer, yet I am told you have delivered very interesting lectures to crowded houses. Why have you neglected to mention this feature of your career?

A. My reason for not mentioning my lectures is due to the fact that it is a part of my ordinary civil life. It is only the thrilling part of a man's career that can hold public attention.

But since you bring the matter to my attention, I will state for your information or for these records, as you please, that I lecture occasionally, though I have not given up my time to this branch of work.

I will mention only one lecture and that only because I was presented to the audience by a gentleman of both local and national fame, the Honorable Lamar Fontaine, who introduced me to the audience in Clarksdale, Mississippi, in the following language:

"My Friends:—

"We have with us tonight a silver-haired veteran, a man whose life story reads like the pages of some enchanted

romance, a something to dream over. In his early teens he saw the hosts of a licentious, pillaging enemy, under orders of their commanders, destroying the region around him, murdering the old men, and the helpless women, and innocent children, and every fibre of his proud soul resented these outrages. He came, a lineal descendent, of that proud race of Anglo-Saxons, whose ancestors crossed over the foaming waves of a trackless sea, to make a home for liberty and freedom in a wild, pathless wilderness. They had never worn the yoke of a tyrant or been dominated by an inferior race. They carried their banners of true chivalry and the scepter of power over the tops of the Blue Ridge and the mountains of Kentucky and Tennessee, down into the valley of the Father of Waters, and mirrored their forms in the glassy lakes of the far west. They were true and loyal to the principles of justice and right. And they kept alive those fires of loyalty to friends, rank and sex. The chastity of honor governed their every move, and they never deviated a hair's breadth from the rectitude of their forefathers; and a stain upon their honor was felt more keenly than a gaping wound. Keen eyed, quick handed, ready to avenge an insult, or to guard and protect the helpless, brave and generous to a fault, they loved their friends, hated their enemies openhandedly and quick to avenge a wrong or punish the wrongdoer. Such, my friends, were the forebearers of this man. My friends, some men have souls in their bodies, but this man is in truth, a soul, with a body. Look at Kit Dalton, who now makes his bow to you."

FINALE.

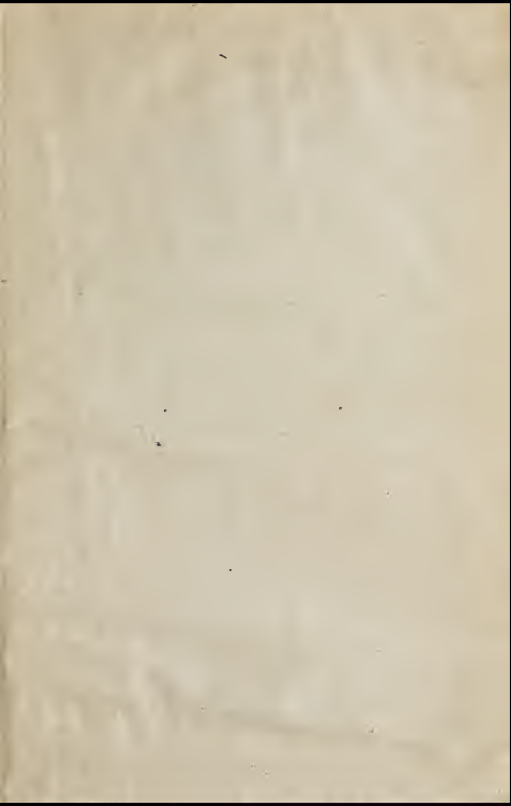
I have told the story of my life in which there was much hatred toward my northern brethren, but now at the advanced age of 71 years I look back over the sands of time and shed a silent tear for those who have suffered as I have and in conclusion I am glad that there is no more north and south, no more hatred towards our fellowman. We have shaken the right hand of fellowship and brotherly love and are all serving and living under the Stars and Stripes, the most glorious flag that ever fluttered over a free and courageous people.

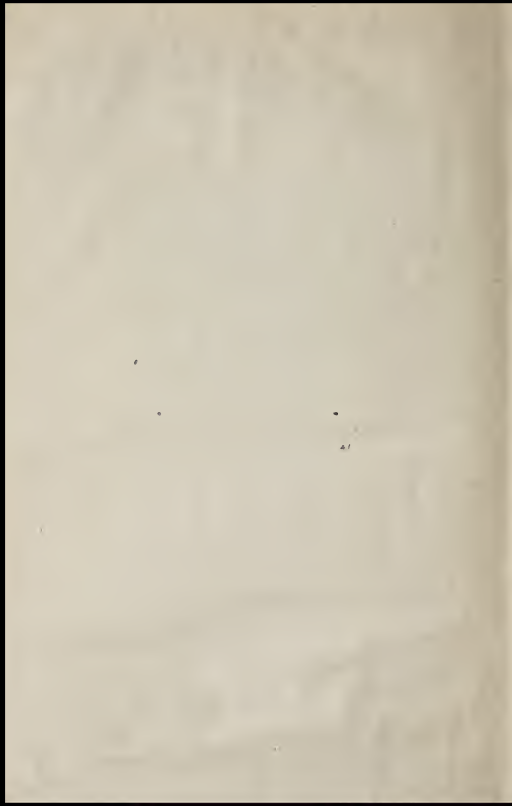
KIT DALTON.

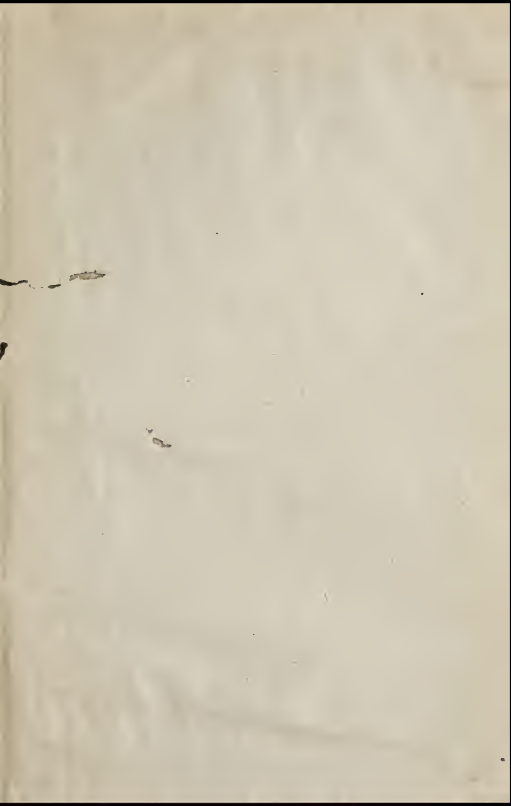


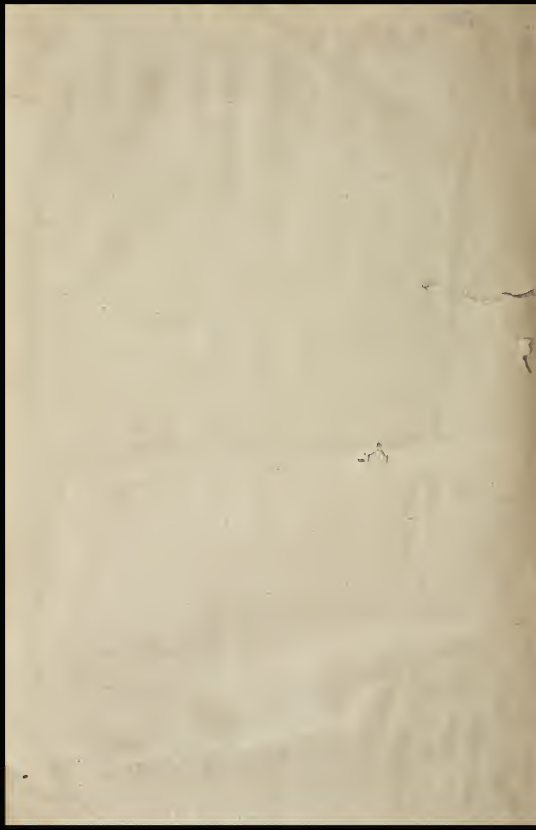


CAPT. KIT DALTON as he appears today at the age of 71 years. His nephew, KIT DALTON McCawley, to his right, who is assisting him in selling this book of his life history.









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